Godhead is light. Nescience is darkness. Where there is Godhead there is no nescience.

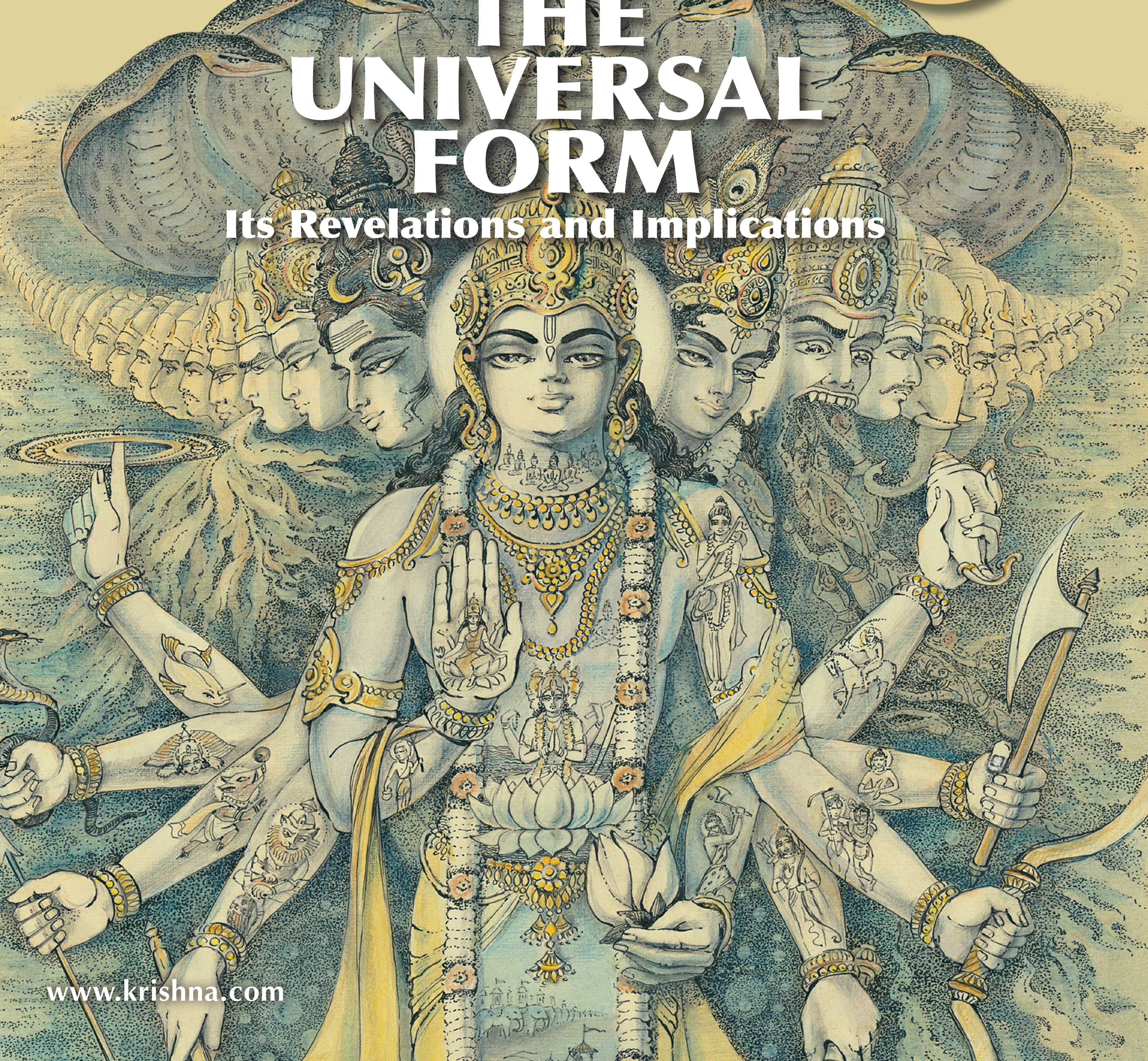
BACK TO GODHEAD

The Magazine of the
Hare Krishna Movement

Jan/Feb 2013 • $4.50

THE UNIVERSAL FORM

Its Revelations and Implications



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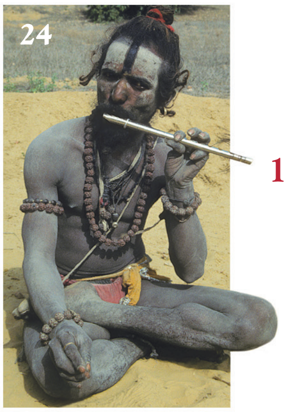
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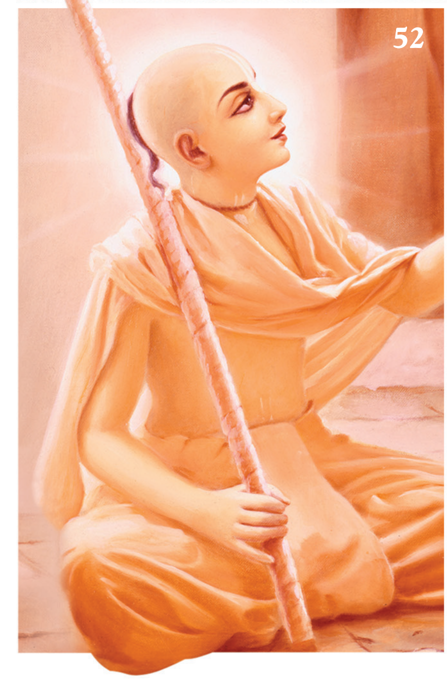
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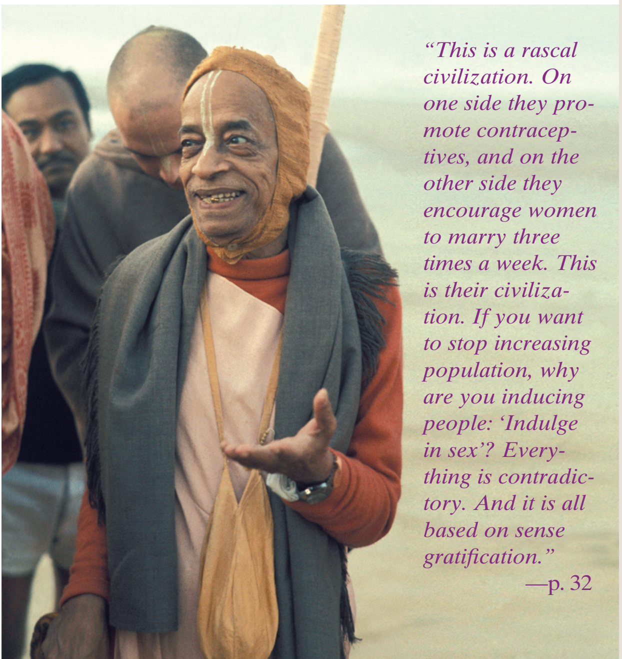
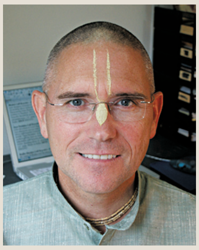
COVER The Vedic scriptures relate at least five incidents of Lord Kṛṣṇa's showing His universal form, which contains everything in the material world. Please see the article beginning on page 36. (Painting by Devakī Devī Dāsī.)



"This is a rascal civilization. On one side they promote contraceptives, and on the other side they encourage women to marry three times a week. This is their civilization. If you want to stop increasing population, why are you inducing people: 'Indulge in sex'? Everything is contradictory. And it is all based on sense gratification."
—p. 32

WELCOME



In Chapter Eleven of the *Bhagavad-gītā,* Lord Kṛṣṇa puts on an astounding show by revealing His universal form to Arjuna. The display edifies Arjuna, frightens him, and serves as a warning to anyone claiming a status equal to Kṛṣṇa's, as Satyarāja Dāsa discusses in "The Universal Form: Its Revelations and Implications."

Kṛṣṇa's universal form is not very attractive to His devotees. One reason for this is that devotees know that the universal form is a subordinate feature of God because they've gained an intimate knowledge of God by hearing from authoritative sources. Āhlādinī Rādhārāṇī Devī Dāsī discusses the importance of hearing in "Ear: The Gateway to Liberation." And hearing from the right sources is a cornerstone in the homeschooling philosophy that guided Aruddhā Devī Dāsī as she educated her two sons at home. In "Academics and Devotion" she shares her insights on how to raise academically qualified children who are happy in Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

Practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness can be challenging because material desires impede our progress by attacking our concentration and sapping our energy. In "Parasites of the Mind" Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa discusses how we can protect ourselves from three main invaders of our spiritual consciousness.

Hare Kṛṣṇa.—*Nāgarāja Dāsa, Editor*

OUR PURPOSES

- To help all people discern reality from illusion, spirit from matter, the eternal from the temporary.
- To expose the faults of materialism.
- To offer guidance in the Vedic techniques of spiritual life.
- To preserve and spread the Vedic culture.
- To celebrate the chanting of the holy names of God as taught by Lord Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu.
- To help every living being remember and serve Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead.

Śrī Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa are together the one Supreme Absolute Truth.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the combined incarnation of Rādhā-Kṛṣṇa, inaugurated the chanting of Hare Kṛṣṇa five hundred years ago.

His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

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*The Magazine of the
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Letters

Emergency Service

I loved reading the well-written and encouraging article "Bhakti and Our Authentic Illusory Self," by Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī in the September/October issue. Her articles are always full of meaning for those who want to practically apply the philosophy of Kṛṣṇa consciousness in their everyday lives. Although I had understood that we should use our talents and nature in the service of the Lord, now I understand it from the perspective of a psychotherapist.

Sometimes as aspiring devotees we may reject our natures, talents, or skills in the name of thinking that to surrender to Kṛṣṇa's will and to selflessly please guru and Kṛṣṇa is higher. Although we are taught to please Kṛṣṇa by doing any activity that may even be against our nature, we see that if we artificially or immaturely abandon our natures, we face the difficulty of not knowing ourselves fully and how we can use our conditioned natures in the service of Kṛṣṇa. Therefore, I feel that this article is very relevant and serves to eradicate the misunderstanding that we should prematurely reject or renounce everything and be something else.

On the liberated platform we may do any service for Kṛṣṇa, yet Śrīla Prabhupāda encouraged unconditional devotional service even for practicing devotees. And although he did engage devotees according to their propensities, many times young devotees had to take on tasks that were difficult and challenging to their personal natures. So does this mean that although we are aware of our individual "authentic illusory" self and accept and use it in Kṛṣṇa's service, we should also be prepared to do anything for Kṛṣṇa? How can we better understand this?

Another question: Do our natures and services on the liberated platform in the spiritual world somehow reflect our conditioned natures in the material world?

Nikuñja Vilāsinī Devī Dāsī
Durban, South Africa

Arcana Siddhī Devī Dāsī replies: Your first question is "Although we are aware of our individual 'authentic illusory' self and accept and use it in Kṛṣṇa's service, should we also be prepared to do anything for Kṛṣṇa?" My husband often says, "We should be willing to take up emergency service, but we shouldn't major in it." We can learn much about surrender and sacrifice, both of which are foundational to developing love for Kṛṣṇa, when we take up a service in an emergency situation. But if there is a chronic lack of devotees to manage services and you are constantly being called to do emergency services, it can lead to frustration and "burn out." As with many things, we need to apply our intelligence and figure out how to have a healthy balance. Understanding our natures, we have to bend but not break.

Your second question is "Do our natures and services on the liberated platform in the spiritual world somehow reflect our conditioned natures in the material world?"

Depending on our stage of *bhakti,* our inclinations, natures, and service may be coming from our awakening spiritual consciousness. They could also be from our past karma, and by dovetailing those propensities in service to Kṛṣṇa, they will become purified and retired.

In the stage of *anartha-nivrittī,* the majority of our material conditioning is cleared. While we may get glimpses of our spiritual nature prior to navigating through this stage, it is really after this stage that we begin to develop our true spiritual aspirations. The more we engage in *bhakti* the more our conditioned natures include spiritual elements. Thus in one of our material births our budding spiritual reality that we have been cultivating for perhaps lifetimes will appear as part of our nature, manifesting in our practitioner's body.

Spiritual Challenges

Why do we sometimes feel filled with spiritual strength but then go down when we face unfavorable circumstances? What should we do?

Dayalu Vithoba
Via the Internet

Our reply: First of all, as much as possible avoid "unfavorable circumstances." But of course this is not always possible, so we have to fortify ourselves against Māyā's attacks. The first defense is good association. You need to have people or a person you can call when you feel spiritually weak or come up against a challenging situation. Also, chanting well and reading Prabhupāda's books regularly will help you to stay strong.

Another thing to be careful of is what you put into your ears, eyes, and mouth. In other words, carefully monitor what you do with your time (e.g., don't watch TV, be careful about what you do on the computer) and eat only Kṛṣṇa *prasāda*. When we take nonsense into our head and body, it is bound to have some effect eventually and will make us more susceptible to falldown and weakness.

Thinking and Karma

Does thinking lead to karma?

Anādi Jagannātha Dāsa
Via the Internet

Our reply: Śrīla Prabhupāda told us that in Kali-yuga we get karmic reactions only for what we do and not what we think. If we do not act on sinful thoughts, then there is no karmic reaction. That said, however, if we continue to think about sinful things, then eventually our thinking will lead to sinful action, and we will find ourselves moving quickly from contemplation to action. Therefore it is important to move the mind away from sinful thinking and bring it back to Kṛṣṇa and devotional service. This is one of the reasons we practice *sādhana bhakti* under the direction of a spiritual master. When we have a regulated life, then we have boundaries that keep us moving from one Kṛṣṇa conscious activity to another, making it more difficult to find the time to allow the mind to drift to sinful thoughts. And if the mind does so, we immediately have some engagement that will pull us back to our Kṛṣṇa conscious duties. This is one reason Śrīla Prabhupāda would often quote the saying "An idle mind is the devil's workshop."

Replies were written by Krishna.com Live Help volunteers. Please write to us at: BTG, P. O. Box 430, Alachua, Florida 32616, USA. Email: editors@krishna.com.

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FOUNDER'S LECTURE

New York City—December 4, 1966

THE UNKNOWN GOAL

Lord Kṛṣṇa says that He, and not solutions to temporary so-called problems, should be the goal of life.

By His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda

Founder-*Ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

gatir bhartā prabhuḥ sākṣī
nivāsaḥ śaraṇaṁ suhṛt
prabhavaḥ pralayaḥ sthānaṁ
nidhānaṁ bījam avyayam

"I am the goal, the sustainer, the master, the witness, the abode, the refuge, and the most dear friend. I am the creation and the annihilation, the basis of everything, the resting place, and the eternal seed." —*Bhagavad-gītā* 9.18

THE LORD IS *gati,* the destination or goal. Due to our ignorance, due to our becoming overwhelmed by the illusory energy, we do not know what is our destination of life. The destination of life is to reestablish one's lost relationship with the Supreme Lord. Unfortunately, people do not know this. They are simply thinking that the purpose of life is to have the greatest amounts of sense gratification. This is illusion. Because we are materially absorbed and the material concept of life centers on our senses, we try to squeeze out all kinds of pleasure from the senses. People have no other information. They are earning, working very hard, and their ultimate goal is sense gratification.

The actual ultimate goal is Kṛṣṇa, or the Supreme Lord. Where are you going? Which way are you making your progress? "Oh, that we cannot say. We make progress in sense gratification. Our goal is the greatest amount of pleasure we can derive from the senses." No, the goal is God, Viṣṇu, the Supreme Lord, of whom we are the parts and parcels.

Having forgotten our relationship with God, we are struggling. Lord Kṛṣṇa says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.7),

mamaivāṁśo jīva-loke
jīva-bhūtaḥ sanātanaḥ
manaḥ ṣaṣṭhānīndriyāṇi
prakṛti-sthāni karṣati

"The living entities in this conditioned world are My eternal fragmental parts. Due to conditioned life, they are struggling very hard with the six senses, which include the mind." *Prakṛti-sthāni:* "in this material nature." The fragmental portions of the Supreme Lord, the living entities, are struggling, entrapped by the senses and the mind. But this is not the goal. The Lord says in the *Bhagavad-gītā* that He is the goal.

This material nature is the external nature of the Supreme Lord. Because we have been trapped in this material nature, we are thinking that to make material advancement in life is perfection. This is called *durāśayā. Duḥ* means very distant or very difficult, and *āśayā* means hope. This hope is never to be fulfilled. This is called illusion. We are making progress to make life perfect by material advancement. This is our undue hope. It will never be fulfilled.

People who do not know the destination are trying to discover by experiment what has already been discovered.

And what is the activity? *Adānta-gobhir viśatāṁ tamisram. Go* means the senses. *Adānta* means unbridled, uncontrolled. Uncontrolled senses—just like an uncontrolled horse. You are on the carriage, and your horse is uncontrolled, unbridled, and he is taking you with full force and putting you into the Atlantic Ocean. You have no control. *Viśatām* means you are entering the darkest part of ignorance because of your uncontrolled, unbridled senses.

People who do not know the destination are trying to discover by experiment what has already been discovered. I'll give you a practical example.

The father of one of our students came and told him, "Oh, I don't like this association you have joined. Why don't you chase after women? Eat and drink and enjoy. I will give you a car."

You see? What is the fault of that poor student? He is trying to give up all intoxication. He is not eating meat. He is living purely on vegetables. He is controlling his senses, not having illicit sexual relationships, attending class morning and evening. Oh, his father thinks it is dangerous.

But the father has already experienced material life. He was married and divorced three times. He has a very bad experience of life, but he is inducing his son to do the same thing. He has no other idea.

This is called *punaḥ punaś carvita-carvaṇānām:* "chewing the chewed." I take a sugarcane, chew it, take out all the juice, and then throw it into the street. Then somebody comes and chews it. What is there for him? I have already taken all the juice. This material life experience—chasing after women and drinking and sense gratification and spending like anything and so many things—we have seen it, but we have not experienced any actual happiness. Still, I am trying to induce my son, my dependent, into that way of life.

Foolish people do not think, "I have already experienced all these things. What benefit, what happiness, have I gotten? I am frustrated in my life. So why shall I induce my son to do the same thing? If I at all love my son, why shall I induce him into that? Let him experiment with this Kṛṣṇa consciousness." No. Because of uncontrolled senses they cannot think that way.

There is a very nice story. Monkeys are always very busy. Do you know? But their business is to simply destroy. In the village there was a carpenter who was splitting a big beam with a saw. At the end of his workday, he had sawed halfway through the beam, so he put a block between the two sides and went away. A monkey came and pulled out the block, causing the two halves of the beam to snap together and cut off his tail. So he went to his society and said, "To cut one's tail is the latest fashion."

I saw a similar story in the cinema in my childhood. A man was sitting in the park, and some naughty boy nailed his coattail to the bench. When he got up, half of the tail was taken away. So when he was dancing at the ball, everyone was looking to his backside: "What is this? His tail is cut." He saw in the mirror. "My tail is cut." So he began to dance more nicely, and everyone asked him, "What is . . . ?" "Oh, this is the latest fashion." So all the men began to cut their coattails. You see?

Life is going on. "I have become befooled, so I don't want my son to be intelligent. Let him become befooled."

This is repeatedly chewing the chewed. But from the *Bhagavad-gītā* we understand that our ultimate goal of life is to reach Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Lord, *gatiḥ.*

Kṛṣṇa, the Maintainer

The next word in today's verse is *bhartā,* "maintainer." Kṛṣṇa is maintaining everyone. That's a fact. There are 8,400,000 species of life, out of which human beings are 400,000. The other species have no economic problem. There is no question of starvation. They are eating, sleeping, mating, and defending in their own way. They have no problem. Only civilized men have problems. They do not believe that God protects everyone. By advancement of civilization they have learned this art, to refuse God. They want to solve their economic problem by themselves. God is giving them sufficient grains, fruits, vegetables, milk. No, they want to solve their problems by killing poor animals. But they do not believe in God. They do not consider "I am killing poor animals. They are also sons of God as much I am. God is maintaining that poor animal. God is maintaining me. Why should I encroach upon others' life?” You see? They have no such sense because they don’t believe in God. They have no such faith. This is going on.

But in the *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says, “No, I am the Supreme. And I am the *prabhava.* Everything, whatever you see, is emanating from Me.”

We have no economic problem. God is maintaining everyone. The production all over the world is sufficient to provide all the population of the world. That is God’s arrangement. There is no scarcity. But because we have made our own rules and regulations, we can produce much more than what is needed by us and throw the excess into the ocean. Still, if some poor country or poor brother comes, we will refuse to share. Because we do not know that our destination should be God, we violate the rules of nature, the laws of God, and are becoming entrapped by this material nature. This is a fact.

Gatir bhartā prabhuḥ. Prabhu means the master. And *sākṣī* means witness. God is sitting within your heart, so He is the witness. Whatever you are doing, He is witnessing it. He is giving you facility to do whatever you like, but at the same time you may forget. Suppose I wanted to do something in this life but my task was not fulfilled. Next life, when I get another body, God reminds me, “Well, you wanted to do this. Why not experiment?” Lord Kṛṣṇa states in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (15.15): *sarvasya cāhaṁ hṛdi sanniviṣṭaḥ:* “I am seated in everyone’s heart.” *Mattaḥ smṛtir jñānam apohanaṁ ca:* “From Me come remembrance, knowledge, and forgetfulness.” Why does God make one person forgetful and encourage another person? He responds to their desire. Most people don’t want to revive their relationship with the Supreme Lord.

Whenever I speak of God, some person will challenge, “Oh, what is God? Swamiji, why are you speaking about God?”

They don’t want God, so God responds: “Forget Me. Yes, you forget and suffer.”

Others want God, such as the student trying to reestablish his relationship with Kṛṣṇa. Oh, Kṛṣṇa gives him what he desires too: “Yes.”

God’s business is to make you forgetful because you want to forget. And when you are advanced, if you want to know, if you want to reestablish your relationship with Him, He will encourage you.

The witness gives you full independence. Whatever you like, you do, but He gives instruction at the same time: “These things will not satisfy you, My dear boy. Give up all this nonsense. Come to Me. I shall give you all protection.” But we don’t want to take protection. What can God do? He can do everything, but He doesn’t interfere with your affairs. If you want to forget, He will give you so many facilities by the illusory energy that you’ll forget, forget, forget.

Now you have this beautiful body of a civilized human being. And you can get more developed bodies, like those of Brahmā or the sun or the moon. And if you forget, you go down to the cats and dogs and ants and germs and so many things—become a worm in the stool. He will give you all facilities. This is called *karma-cakra,* the cycle of work.

Reviving Our Pure Desire

As you desire, God gives you facility. Therefore our pure desire should be revived. For that, the *Bhagavad-gītā* and other scriptures are there. We have forgotten all these things. Therefore the books and the scriptures are there. That is a mercy of God.

Every day we consult books to do something. What is the postal rate? I do not know. I have a parcel to send, so at once I consult a book. The direction is there, the postal guide is there, and I do the right thing. Similarly, when we have forgotten the destination of life, we have to consult the scriptures for direction.

The Lord says, *gatir bhartā prabhuḥ sākṣī:* “I am the destination.

What Is the Hare Kṛṣṇa Movement?

Founded in 1966 by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) carries on a great ancient tradition rooted in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the teachings Lord Kṛṣṇa spoke five millennia ago. The *Gītā* and the other Vedic scriptures declare Kṛṣṇa to be the original person, God Himself, who appears periodically in this world to liberate all living beings.

Only five hundred years ago, Kṛṣṇa descended as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu to teach the most sublime and effective means of meditation for the present day: the chanting of the names of God, especially as found in the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra.

Today members of ISKCON continue Lord Caitanya’s movement by distributing the teachings of Lord Kṛṣṇa and the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra all over the world.

Pronunciation

We spell Sanskrit words and names by a phonetic system that lets you know how to say each word. Pronounce short **a** like the **u** in b**u**t, long **ā** like the **a** in f**a**r (and held twice as long as the short **a**). Pronounce **e** like the **a** in ev**a**de, long **ī** like the **i** in p**i**que. Pronounce the vowel **ṛ** like the **ri** in **ri**m, and **c** like the **ch** in **ch**air. Pronounce consonants like **ch**, **jh**, and **dh** as in staun**ch-h**eart, hed**ge-h**og, and re**d-h**ot. Pronounce **ś** and **ṣ** like **sh**. So for *Kṛṣṇa* say KRISHNA, for *Caitanya* say CHAITANYA.

Spiritual Names

ISKCON members receive names of Lord Kṛṣṇa or his great devotees, combined with Dāsa, for men, or Dāsī, for women, both of which mean “servant.” For instance, the name Kṛṣṇa Dāsa means “servant of Kṛṣṇa.”

I am your maintainer. I am your Lord. I am witnessing what you are doing.” *Nivāsa:* “And you are living in Me. You are not independent.” We are living on the earth, underneath the sky. And what is the sky? What is the earth? The energy of the Supreme Lord.

Nivāsaḥ śaraṇam. “You are trying to live. Every moment you are flattering somebody who is greater than you, but why don’t you come to Me? You cannot live without flattering your boss. That is your position.”

Śaraṇam means to take shelter of somebody. Especially in these days, however educated I may be, with an application I take shelter of a big man: “Please give me some employment.” I may be a very intelligent man and become the ruler of this country. Oh, I will have to flatter people on the street: “Please vote for me. Please vote for me. Please reelect me.” So I am taking *śaraṇam.* I am flattering. I am taking shelter at every moment. So why not take shelter of God?

We have to learn from *Bhagavad-gītā,* directly spoken by the Supreme Lord, and accept it and act accordingly.

“Oh, what do you say? Why do you speak about God, Swamiji?”

They will take shelter of dog but not God. You see? This is going on.

Śaraṇaṁ suhṛt. Suhṛt means well-wisher. Who can become more of a well-wisher than God? I can be a friend, a well-wisher, to a limited circle, but God is the friend and well-wisher of all living entities. I can take care of my family members, to see that they are happy, they are eating, but God is taking care of innumerable living entities. You see? I don’t take care of the ants in my room to make sure they are eating. I do not take care of the bugs in my bed. God is taking care of them. He is *suhṛt.* He wants that “You live. You are given freedom, whatever you like. But if you want to be happy, then give up all this nonsense. Come to Me. Take shelter in Me. I will give you all protection.”

Prabhavaḥ: development. You are trying for economic development, but how can you have economic development if there is no material supplied by God? Can you build a big skyscraper without the materials being supplied by God? Can you manufacture wood? Can you manufacture stone? Can you manufacture lime? Can you manufacture iron? You cannot manufacture. You can work, labor. The materials are supplied by God, and by your labor, your intelligence, you can transform one thing into another.

Economic experts say that. Man cannot manufacture anything. He can transform one thing into another. You cannot manufacture iron. You can transform the iron ores in a big iron factory. That you can do and waste your valuable time. That energy you have. But you cannot produce iron. You can manufacture glass and live in a very comfortable building with glass on all sides, but what is glass? Glass is a stone melted with some chemicals. The stone is supplied by God, and the chemicals are supplied by God. The intelligence with which you are working is supplied by God. Your body is supplied by God. You are God’s. So everything becomes God’s. *Prabhavaḥ:* “I am the source of supply of everything.”

Pralayaḥ. If God wants, in a second your New York City will be pushed into the Atlantic Ocean. *Sthānam:* He is the shelter. *Nidhānaṁ bījam. Bījam* means the seed.

Avyayam: imperishable. Now, what are the living entities? They are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. We are living entities. We are applying our energy to build all these things, but these materials have no value if we are not there. This land, America, was lying vacant before civilized persons from Europe came here. By the energy of these living entities, the matter here developed. Matter is not prominent. Don’t give more importance to matter. The important thing is the living entity. And what is the living entity? The living entity is the part and parcel of the Supreme Lord. Therefore He is the cause of the seeds of the living entities.

The next verse begins *tapāmy aham:* “I am the giver of heat.” The sun gives heat. You cannot manufacture a sun, but the Lord can. Therefore He is heating.

Ahaṁ varṣam: “I am rain.” You cannot regulate rain. That is in God’s hand or under God’s management. If there is no rain, you cannot make rain, or if there is too much rain, you cannot stop it.

Nigṛhṇāmy utsṛjāmi: “And if I want, I can give trouble to the whole population of the world. If I want to annihilate them, in a moment I can do that.”

Amṛtam: “If I like, I can give you eternal life.” If we approach God, eternal life is guaranteed. And if we don’t, then we go on in the cycle of birth and death. *Amṛtaṁ caiva mṛtyuś ca sad asac cāham arjuna. Sat* means the spiritual energy, and *asat* means the material energy.

“Because both energies are God’s energies, these energies are also God, Arjuna.”

This description of His personal position, God’s position, is given by Lord Kṛṣṇa to Arjuna. We have to learn from *Bhagavad-gītā,* directly spoken by the Supreme Lord, and accept it and act accordingly. That is called Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We think of Kṛṣṇa. He is everything. So let us become submissive and prosecute this process of devotional service. That is the way of happiness. That is the way of perfection.

Thank you very much.

Glossary

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Ācārya—a spiritual master who teaches by example.

Balarāma—Lord Kṛṣṇa's first expansion, who acts in the role of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother.

Battle of Kurukshetra—an epic battle for rule of the world, fought five thousand years ago.

Bhagavad-gītā—the sacred book in which Lord Kṛṣṇa gives the essence of knowledge to His friend and disciple Arjuna. (Cited as Bg.)

Bhakti—devotional service to the Supreme Lord.

Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura—the spiritual master of His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

Bhakti-yoga—linking with the Supreme Lord through devotional service.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu—the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa who appeared five hundred years ago to teach the chanting of the names of God as the religion for the present age.

Darśana—"viewing," audience with a deity or saintly person.

Dharma—(1) ordained duties or religious principles; (2) one's eternal, natural occupation (i.e., devotional service to the Lord).

Godhead—the Absolute Truth, the Supreme Reality, progressively realized first as the impersonal all-pervasive oneness, more fully as the Supersoul within the heart of every living being, and ultimately as the all-opulent Supreme Person.

Gurukula—a school where children learn the philosophy and practices of Kṛṣṇa consciousness along with regular academic subjects (literally "the place of the guru").

Hare Kṛṣṇa—the great mantra Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

ISKCON—the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Japa—individual chanting of names of God, usually while counting on beads.

Kali-yuga—in the endlessly repeated cycle of four cosmic ages, the present and worst age, the Age of Quarrel, of which 5,000 of 432,000 years have passed.

Karma—material action; its inevitable reaction; or the law by which such action and reaction are governed.

Kīrtana—congregational singing of names of God, usually accompanied by cymbals (*karatālas*) and drums (*mṛdaṅgas*).

Kṛṣṇa—the Supreme Personality of Godhead in His original transcendental form (see "Godhead").

Mahābhārata—the epic history of ancient India, a history in which the *Bhagavad-gītā* appears as the most important and well-known text.

Māyā—illusion; the energy of the Supreme Lord that deludes living entities into forgetting their spiritual nature and forgetting God.

Māyāvādī—one who regards the Absolute Truth as ultimately impersonal.

Modes of nature—the three qualities (goodness, passion, and ignorance) that hold sway over all action in the material world.

Nityānanda—the incarnation of Lord Balarāma who appeared with Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prasāda—vegetarian food that has been prepared for the Lord and offered to Him with devotion.

Purāṇas—Vedic histories.

Rādhārāṇī—Lord Kṛṣṇa's consort and pleasure potency.

Rathayātrā—"chariot festival": a festival in which the form of Kṛṣṇa is borne in procession on a large canopy-topped chariot or float, especially the festival originating in Puri, India, for Jagannātha (Lord Kṛṣṇa, "the Lord of the universe").

Sannyāsa—the renounced life of a man who relinquishes home to dedicate himself fully to the Supreme.

Śāstra—scriptures, especially the Vedic scriptures of India.

Śrī—an honorific meaning "opulent" (similarly: Śrīla, Śrīmad, Śrīmān, Śrīmatī).

Śrīla Prabhupāda—His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam—the most important of the eighteen *Purāṇas,* which tells of the nature and pastimes of Lord Kṛṣṇa and His devotees. (Cited as *Bhāg.*)

Supersoul—the form of the Lord who resides in every heart along with the individual soul.

Vaiṣṇava—a devotee of the Supreme Lord (from the word *Viṣṇu*).

Varṇāśrama—the Vedic social system. It organizes society into four occupational and four spiritual divisions (*varṇas* and *āśramas*). The members of the four *varṇas* are the *brāhmaṇas* (intellectuals and priests), the *kṣatriyas* (administrators and soldiers), the *vaiśyas* (farmers and businessmen), and the *śūdras* (laborers and artisans). The members of the four *āśramas* are the *brahmacārīs* (celibate students), *gṛhasthas* (married people), *vānaprasthas* (retired people), and *sannyāsīs* (renunciants).

Vedas—the hymns of knowledge revealed by the Lord Himself at the beginning of creation.

Vedic—pertaining to the culture in which the *Vedas* and related scriptures guide all aspects of human life.

Viṣṇu—any form of the Personality of Godhead (see "Godhead"); the forms the Lord manifests to create and sustain the material world.

Vṛndāvana—the transcendental abode of Lord Kṛṣṇa, mirrored on earth as the town in India where Kṛṣṇa appeared five thousand years ago.

FLIGHT
DESTINATION
GATE #
STATUS
742 LOS ANGELES A23 DELAYED
LONDON C72 DELAYED
MADRID B34 DELAYED
PARIS A14 DELAYED
TOKYO C89 DELAYED
HONG KONG G12 DELAYED
MIAMI C5 DELAYED
NEW YORK D13 DELAYED
RIO DEJANEIRO A4 DELAYED
SYDNEY B22 DELAYED

The Tale Of Dorothy

Waiting for a delayed flight, a traveling swami consoles an irate passenger with Kṛṣṇa's teachings.

By Rādhānātha Swami

WE WAITED. And waited. It was a sweltering summer day in the Florida panhandle. The morning sun glared through the expansive windows of an airport departure gate. There, a young blond-haired woman, neatly uniformed with a blue vest over a pressed white shirt and matching blue pants, stepped up to the counter, timidly surveyed the room, then announced a one-hour delay. Passengers sighed, edgy to escape from the heat and travel north. With cellular phones pressed to their ears, they persistently glanced at their wristwatches.

Among them stood a middle-aged woman. She had nicely coiffed reddish-brown hair. Her dress and demeanor hinted that she was a lady of wealth and taste.

Suddenly, she flushed red, flung her boarding pass, and screamed, "No! You can't do this to me."

Her outrage jolted the assembly.

Everyone stared as she stomped to the counter, stuck her finger in the receptionist's face, and shouted, "I warn you, do not anger me. Put me on that plane at once!"

The airline hostess cowered.

"But ma'am, there's nothing I can do. The air conditioning system of the plane has broken down."

The woman's lips quivered.

Flight info: © Chad Anderson | dreamstime.com. Airport lounge: © Michael Westhoff | istockphoto.com

Her eyes burned.

She screeched louder, "Don't you fight with me, you stupid child. You don't know who I am. Damn it, do something. Now! I can't take it."

She ranted on and on.

After finishing her verbal lashing, she fumed and scanned the lounge. Her eyes landed on me, sitting alone in a corner of the room in my saffron-colored swami robes. She stormed toward me while everyone looked on.

Now, standing almost on top of me, her face distorted with anger, she yelled, "Are you a monk?"

Oh God, I thought, *why me.*

I really didn't need this. After an arduous week of lectures and meetings, I just wanted to be left alone.

"Answer me," she persisted. "Are you a monk?"

"Something like that," I whispered.

The whole room watched, no doubt delighted that I got to be the lightning rod and not them.

"Then I demand an answer," she challenged. "Why is my flight late? Why is God doing this to me?"

"Please ma'am," I said. "Sit down and let us talk about it."

She sat beside me.

"My name is Rādhānātha Swami," I said. "You can call me Swami. Please tell me what is in your heart?"

I have asked this question thousands of times and never know what to expect.

She said her name was Dorothy, that she was a housewife, fifty-seven years old, and lived on the East Coast. She had been living happily with her family until . . . then she started to weep. She pulled tissue after tissue from her purse, blew her nose, and wept some more.

“It was tragic,” she said. “All at once I lost my husband of thirty years and my three children. Now I’m alone. I can’t bear the pain.”

She gripped the handle of her chair.

“Then I was cheated. The bank put my house into foreclosure and kicked me out on the street. You see this handbag? That’s all that’s left.”

Years of training in *bhakti* taught me that we all have the power to soothe another person’s heart by accessing the love within ourselves.

Looking more closely at her face, I noted that beneath the well-coiffed exterior her complexion was pale, her eyebrows tense, and her lips slanted down in sadness. Dorothy went on to explain that if all that sadness were not enough, she had recently been diagnosed with terminal cancer. She had one month left to live. In a desperate effort to save her life, she had discovered a cancer clinic in Mexico that claimed they might possibly have a cure. But she had to be admitted today. If she missed her connecting flight in Washington, D.C., her chances of survival were finished.

One of my duties is to oversee spiritual services in a hospital in India. I have ministered to victims of terrorist bombs, earthquakes, tsunamis, rape, trauma, disease, poverty, and heartbreak of all sorts, but I cannot remember more anguish written on a human face than Dorothy’s.

“And now this flight is late,” she said, “and there goes my last chance to live. I tried to be a good wife and mother, I go to church, I give in charity, and I never willfully hurt anyone. But now there is no one in the world who cares if I live or die. Why is God doing this to me?”

From Discomfort to Sympathy

Minutes before, I had been cringing at her obnoxious behavior. How easy it is to judge people by external appearances. Understanding what was below the surface flooded my heart with sympathy. When she saw tears welling in my eyes, her voice softened.

“It seems maybe you care,” she said.

What could I do? I felt too weak to do anything. Closing my eyes, I prayed to be an instrument to help her.

“Dorothy, I do feel for you. You’re a special soul.”

“Special,” she huffed. “I’ve been thrown out like a worthless piece of trash and I’m going to die. But I believe you think I’m special, and I thank you for that.”

“There may not be anything you can do about what has happened,” I said, “but you can choose how you will respond. How you react can affect the future.”

“What do you mean?”

“You can lament how cruelly the world has cheated you and spend your days cursing life, making others uncomfortable, and dying a meaningless death. Or you can go deeper inside those experiences and grow spiritually.”

I remembered her comment about going to church.

“Doesn’t it say in the Bible, ‘Seek and ye shall find’ and also ‘Knock and the door will open’? Would you rather die in depression or in gratitude? You have that choice.”

Her hand trembled and she grasped my forearm.

“I’m so afraid, Swami. I’m so afraid of dying. Please tell me what death is.”

Her face had all but wilted. What could I do? I felt so incompetent. If only I had the power to heal her disease. But I didn’t. Still, my years of training in *bhakti* had taught me that we all have the power to soothe another person’s heart by accessing the love within ourselves. I felt like a surgeon in an operating theater and silently offered a prayer before speaking again.

“To understand death,” I said, “we must first understand life. Consider this question: Who are you?”

“My name is Dorothy, I’m American . . .”

“Dorothy, when you were a baby, before you had been given a name, were you not already a person? If you were to show me a baby picture today, you would say, ‘That’s me.’ But your body has changed. Your mind and intellect and desires have changed. When was the last time you craved your mother’s milk? Everything about you has changed, but yet here you are. You can change your name, your nationality, your religion, and with today’s technology you can even change your sex. So what part of you does not change? Who is the witness of all these changes? That witness is you, the real you.”

“I’m not sure I understand what you are saying,” Dorothy said. “What is the real me?”

“You are the conscious person, the life force, the soul within the body, who is having the experiences of this lifetime. You see through your eyes, you taste with your tongue, you smell through your nose, you think with your brain—but who are you, the person receiving all those impressions? That is the soul. The body is like a car and the soul is the driver. We should not neglect the needs of the soul. We eagerly nourish the needs of the body and mind, but if we neglect the needs of the soul we miss out on the real beauty of human life."

"Go on," Dorothy said.

"Animals and other nonhuman species react to situations according to their instincts. Lions don't decide to become vegetarian on ethical grounds, and cows don't become carnivores. Essentially, beings other than humans are driven to satisfy their needs of eating, sleeping, mating, and defending according to the instincts of their species. A human being is entrusted with a priceless gift, which can be used to create the most profound benefits or the worst disasters. That gift is free will.

"But with the blessing of free will comes a price, namely responsibility. We can choose to be a saint or a criminal or anything in between, and we are responsible for the consequences of those choices."

Grace to Cure Guilt

"So just what am I supposed to take away from that?" Dorothy asked. "If everything that has happened to me is my fault, my karma, I don't see how I can avoid drowning myself in guilt."

Dorothy was emotionally starved, and I felt that meeting her was a test of my own spiritual realization.

"Instead of drowning yourself in guilt, you have a precious opportunity to bathe in grace. The philosophy of karma is meant to lift us up and encourage us to make the right choices in both joy and suffering. Depression impedes our progress. In whatever situation we find ourselves we have the opportunity to transform how we see that situation. Devotional life doesn't make every crisis disappear, but it can help us see crises with new eyes, and often that deeper vision leads to a more content frame of mind. I've been practicing that for many years, and I know it has helped me to see the hand of God in all things.

"We humans create our own destiny. We are free to make choices. But once we act, we are bound to the karmic consequences of what we have done. You may choose to get on an airplane to Washington, D.C., but once the plane takes off you have no choice about where you're going to arrive."

Suddenly, the voice of the airline hostess came through the speakers announcing a delay of another hour. Dorothy whimpered. I gave her a sympathetic smile.

"Here is that choice again, either to focus on the miseries of our fate or transform how we see our fate. Most of us have a huge mixture of karmic seeds of fate waiting to sprout. But the most important teaching of the *Bhagavad-gītā* is that we are eternal souls, transcendental to all karmic reactions. That's a very reassuring thing to know. Even in the midst of great distress, people who live with awareness of their eternal nature can be happy. The Bible tells us that the kingdom of God is within. True happiness is an experience of the heart. What is it the heart longs for?"

Dorothy's sad eyes searched mine.

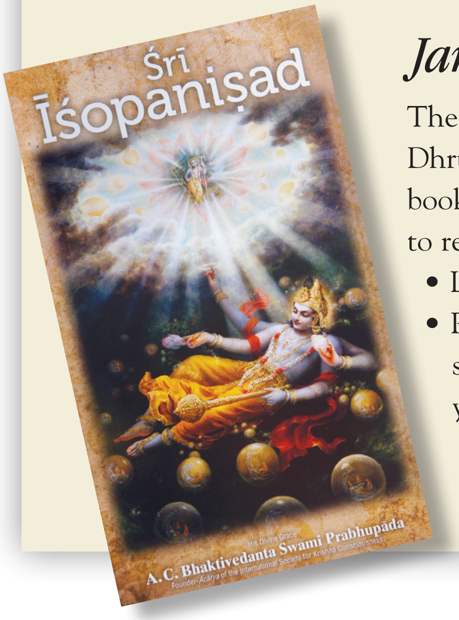
"My heart aches for love," she said.

"We all do," I said. "Our need to love and be loved originates in our innate love for God."

I quoted words Mother Theresa had spoken to me years before.

"The greatest problem in this world is not the hunger of the stomach but the hunger of the heart. All over the world both rich and poor suffer. They are lonely, starving for love. Only God's love can satisfy the hunger of the heart."

"*Bhakti,* the means to access


Śrī Īśopaniṣad
His Divine Grace
A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Founder-Ācārya of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness

e-course on Śrī Īśopaniṣad

January 7 – February 4, 2013

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Bhakti Life

God's love, doesn't necessarily make our material situation go away," I said, "but at the very least it gives us something more than our bitterness to focus on. And more important, when we open up to the possibility of some explanation other than cruel fate, we just may find there is a loving Supreme Being looking out for us. In your present condition, Dorothy, you can turn to God as practically no one else can."

A Mantra for Meditation

Our discussion went on and on. Dorothy asked many intelligent and relevant questions, and I answered them based on what I had learnt from my beloved guru Śrīla Prabhupāda and from my over three decades of experience as a spiritual guide.

"Swami," she said, "I chanted the mantra nonstop throughout the flight. I can't remember being that happy in a long time."

Eventually she closed her eyes and asked, "In your tradition, do you have a meditation to help us turn to God?"

"There are many forms of meditation," I told her. "I have been given one that has, since ancient times, been practiced for awakening the dormant love of the soul. May I teach you?"

"Please."

"This is a mantra. In the Sanskrit language, *man* means the mind and *tra* means to liberate. The mind is compared to a mirror. For more births than we can count, we have allowed dust to cover the mirror of the mind—dust in the form of endless misconceptions, desires, and fears. In that state all we see is the dust, and so that is what we identify with. The chanting of this mantra is a process for cleaning the mirror of the mind and bringing it back to its natural clarity where we can see who we really are: a pure soul, a part of God, eternal, full of knowledge and bliss. As the mind becomes cleaner the divine qualities of the self emerge while ignorance and all of its cohorts fade away. As we approach that state, we can experience the inherent love of God within us. As love of God awakens, unconditional love for every living being manifests spontaneously. We realize that everyone is our sister or brother and a part of our beloved Lord."

The speaker system crackled, and everyone in the room perked up, staring at the airline hostess almost as prisoners would look at a parole board, yearning to be released.

"I'm sorry," she announced, "but they haven't yet fixed the air conditioner, and there will be another hour delay."

Dorothy slapped her forehead.

"Swami, teach me the mantra."

"Please repeat each word after me," I requested. "Hare . . . Kṛṣṇa . . . Hare . . . Kṛṣṇa . . . Kṛṣṇa . . . Kṛṣṇa . . . Hare . . . Hare . . . Hare . . . Rāma . . . Hare . . . Rāma . . . Rāma . . . Rāma . . . Hare . . . Hare . . ."

Dorothy shook her head and shooed me with her hand. "I'll never remember that."

"Would you like me to write it down for you?"

She reached into her purse and pulled out a slip of paper and a pen. After I jotted down the mantra for her, she started meditating on it.

Eventually, when we finally got on and off the much-delayed flight, an amazing sight awaited us. There was Dorothy sitting in a wheelchair she had requested, smiling and waving as everyone rushed by. The passengers were stunned to see one among them who could be so happy. I stopped to say farewell.

"Swami," she said, "I chanted the mantra nonstop throughout the flight. I can't remember being that happy in a long time."

She handed me the slip of paper with the mantra.

"Will you write a message for me to remember you?"

Taking her pen, I wrote of my appreciation for her and a little prayer. She pressed the note to her heart and smiled while tears streamed down her cheeks. Then she said something I will never forget.

"Now, living or dying," she said, "is only a detail. I know that God is with me. Thank you."

I hurried into the terminal and looked up at a monitor. My airline had one last flight to Hartford. It left in ten minutes from another terminal. There was still a chance. Have you ever seen a swami galloping across the corridors of an airport?

One man yelled at me, "Why don't you use your magic carpet?"

As I was running, it struck me that I had forgotten to take Dorothy's cell phone number. How would I ever find out what happened to her? To this day I regret my foolishness.

I made it to the gate just as it was closing. Five seconds more and I would have been too late.

At the cultural center in Hartford, my hosts had adjusted the schedule to accommodate a late start time. I asked if there was a particular topic I should speak on.

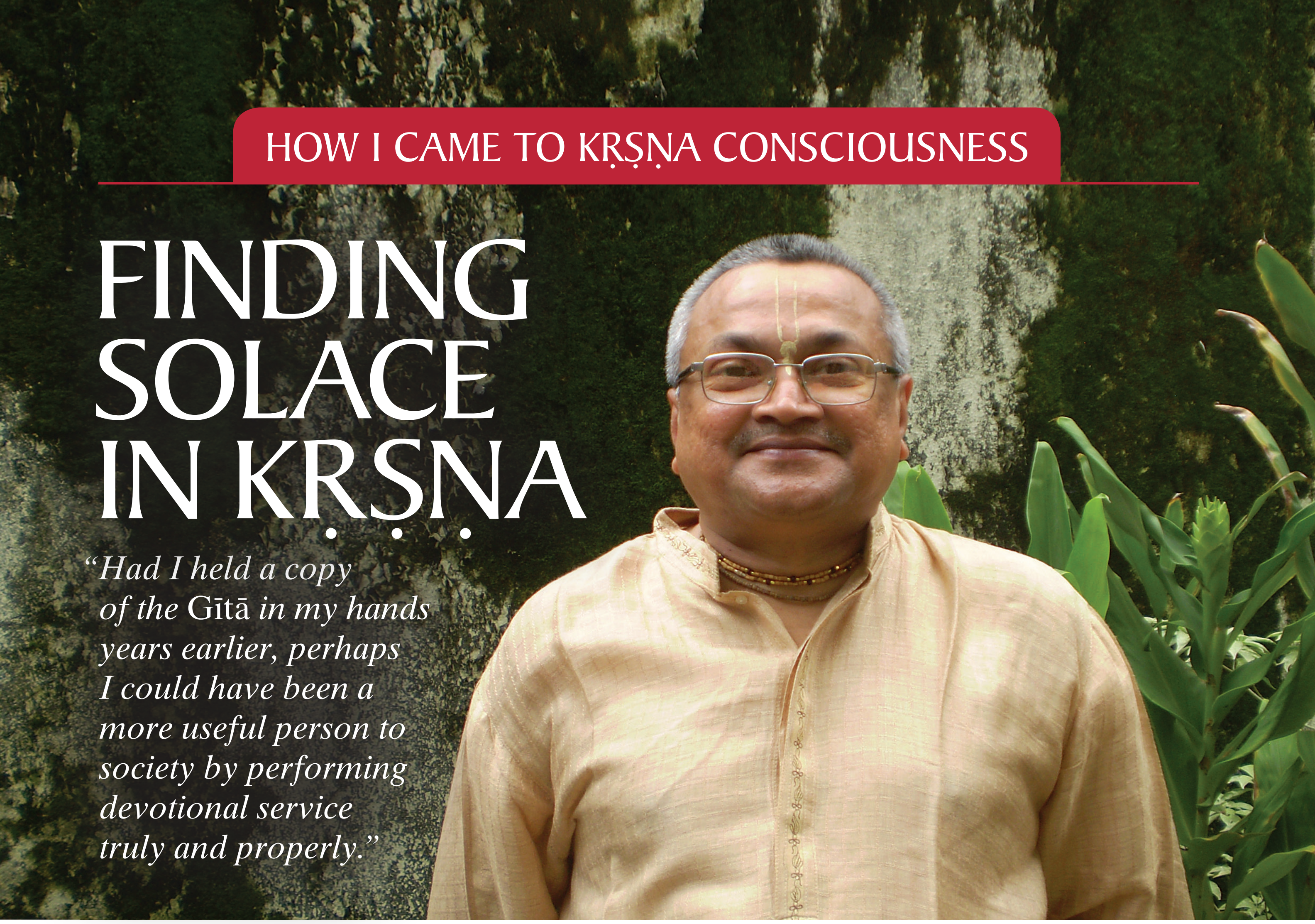
"Anything you like" was the reply.

"Tonight's lecture," I announced, "is called 'Why I Am So Late for the Lecture.'"

Rādhānātha Swami has been an ISKCON Governing Body Commissioner since 1996, with responsibilities in India and Italy. He is the author of The Journey Home: Autobiography of an American Swami, *available from the Krishna.com Store.*

HOW I CAME TO KṚṢṆA CONSCIOUSNESS

FINDING SOLACE IN KṚṢṆA



“Had I held a copy of the Gītā *in my hands years earlier, perhaps I could have been a more useful person to society by performing devotional service truly and properly.”*

By Gautam Saha

FOR MOST OF my childhood I was awkward, immature, unsure of myself, and ignorant of many things. Only in later years did the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* provide answers to the many questions that arose perennially in my mind and to which many of the persons I was thrown in with could hardly provide answers.

After I had outgrown playing with the other boys by the time I was about twelve, I mostly spent my formative years in self-imposed isolation and reading. As soon as I had finished with my day’s studies, I used to retire into seclusion and live my dreams with the classical authors of yesteryear. Or sometimes I would immerse myself in reading reputed magazines or popular comics. My world of thinking was limited to western authors of classical literature and more modern fiction. I had a typical missionary-school upbringing, and though good Catholic priests taught us moral science, I still felt an indefinable void. Due to my immaturity, however, I could not put my finger on it. I grew up uncertain about what one’s goals in life should be and had doubts about the rat race, the injustices of life, the meaning of life, the mediocrity of unbridled materialism, and many other questions that begged answers.

At the end of it all, I told myself, “Let me enjoy myself, and to hell with all the serious questions on life.”

I spent my immediate post-study years enjoying myself in the evenings after working hours, hanging out with my college or office friends, drinking beer or hard liquor, smoking cigarettes, eating meat, playing bridge with stakes, attending dance parties with loud pop music, and so on. Since I was born in a typical Bengali family and was the youngest of six siblings, the routine of eating meat and fish almost daily was expected rather than frowned upon. When my wife and I gave up meat-eating, some of my fish-eating friends and relatives in Kolkata conjectured that I was suffering from either an unmentionable disease or severe financial difficulties.

Even though at home my mother worshiped Kṛṣṇa, together with Śiva, Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī, and others, and held Satya Nārāyaṇa Pūjās every year, I somehow did not take any of it too seriously. I thought it was my mother’s habit, come down the generations as a plain matter of genetic programming. I lacked spiritual understanding and a proper insight into the world of Kṛṣṇa worship. My mother recalls that I used to feel ashamed to bow down before the Lord and considered it too troublesome to remove my shoes before entering the *pūjā* room.

I got to hold my first copy of the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* in my early thirties, a little after my marriage. Somehow, I had not seen one before. I found one in the drawer of a room at the Mumbai airport Centaur Hotel, placed there by ISKCON, beside a copy of the Bible placed by Gideons International. On an impulse, I picked it up and put it in my briefcase. I now consider myself extremely fortunate that it was the translation and commentary of none other than His Divine Grace Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Prabhupāda's scholarship and sincerity, as well as his lucid and powerful writing style, began to have a profound influence on me.

The Effects of Prabhupāda's Gītā

Curiosity alone inspired my initial reading in the book. Then, after a few weeks, Śrīla Prabhupāda's scholarship and sincerity, as well as his lucid and powerful writing style, began to have a profound influence upon me. Very soon there was no turning back. The Lord Himself had taken a firm hold of me. In my free time I began to ponder various *Bhagavad-gītā* verses, and I marveled at Śrīla Prabhupāda's mastery of the subject, his fine flow of language, and his expertise in using the most appropriate words.

As the years passed, I joined ISKCON Juhu as a Life Member—again on an impulse, after listening to a suggestion from a friend, and with very little spiritual inclination. And as I began to visit ISKCON centers in Mumbai, in various cities of India, and in other countries as well, I started taking an interest in mingling with devotees and observing their mannerisms, their beliefs, their lives, and their dealings with others. I discovered especial pleasure in joining *saṅkīrtana* or sitting down with devotees and having delicious Kṛṣṇa *prasāda* in various ISKCON centers. I also clearly recall devotees, including *sannyāsīs,* with whom I had very meaningful conversations. I realized they were talking to me about Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* out of a deep love and compassion for others. I became infected with similar enthusiasm, and my connection with Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* grew. I began chanting, and in a few years reached, and have maintained, the mandatory minimum sixteen rounds.

A couple of verses that had a profound influence on me were *Bhagavad-gītā* 15.19–20: "Whoever knows Me as the Supreme Personality of Godhead, without doubting, is to be understood as the knower of everything, and He therefore engages himself in full devotional service, O son of Bharata. This is the most confidential part of the Vedic scriptures, O sinless one, and it is disclosed now by Me. Whoever understands this will become wise, and his endeavors will know perfection." As I read and reread these verses and Śrīla Prabhupāda's masterful explanations, I was more and more curious, since who does not want to be "the knower of everything"? This induced me to study the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* more seriously and to read the other literature by Śrīla Prabhupāda.

Discarding Bad Habits

Regarding my earlier mentioned tamasic habits (habits in the mode of ignorance), the first to go was smoking. I used to worship Hanumānjī and had asked him to help me kick the habit. He did not let me down. With his support I managed to give up the habit once and for all. Soon after, I greatly reduced my "social drinking," and then finally, practiced total abstinence. For an inveterate fish- and meat-eater like me, giving up meat was another difficult step. But by one swift stroke I managed to cut that out as well. I had promised Their Lordships Śrī Śrī Rādhā-Gopīnāthajī at the Chowpatty temple, way back in 1999, that I would henceforth abstain from meat in all forms. That happened after a young devotee from Chicago gave me a dose of love and compassion and asked me why I was still eating meat after associating with devotees. From that date I have kept my promise—with moral support, I am sure, from Their Lordships Themselves and from various kind devotees whose mercy I was fortunate to receive.

My giving up of meat was the culmination of repeated urgings from various devotees at different ISKCON temples at various times. Sensing their sincerity and their concern for my well-being, I decided to be sincere as well. After that, giving up tea and coffee, and onions and garlic soon after, was much easier. I am always grateful to all those devotees at whose behest and urgings I have managed to give up most of my tamasic habits. I remember each of them with gratitude and affection. I have forgotten some of their names, but I hold them all in my heart with equal affection and respect.

My withdrawal from tamasic sense pleasure was, I now understand, accompanied by increased interaction with devotees and regular reading of the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā*, which I began to enjoy doing. It always feels nice to pick up the *Bhagavad-gītā As It Is* and browse through some pages to read the now familiar lines once again. No doubt, I am very grateful to Śrīla Prabhupāda for having taken so much trouble to present the Lord's words in such a lucid fashion. His masterful hold on the subject had me entranced, and in his inimitable style he delivered Kṛṣṇa to me on a plate.

The thought has occurred to me again and again that Śrīla Prabhupāda's subtle influence on me through his powerful writings caused my disengagement from various forms of tamasic sense pleasure. Can just reading the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* have such a dramatic, profound influence on a man's direction in life, changing his priorities, his values, and his motivations, and giving him strong internal convictions? I would have to say yes.

Though I now abstain from so many things, I do not feel any vacuum, loss, or diminution in my life. On the contrary, my senses are now filled with Lord Kṛṣṇa and His advice. I think about His pastimes, enjoy His *prasāda* in the company of devotees, recall His smiling face, plan for tomorrow's home worship, and write about His innumerable sweet pastimes. I also find I am more creative than I used to be, think more clearly, am less temperamental, and make more efficient use of my time.

The Power of Association

Each meeting or phone conversation with devotees energizes my devotion. As Śrīla Prabhupāda said, to mingle with devotees is truly a potent medicine for the pulls of *māyā* in Kali-yuga, because a devotee, perhaps unknowingly, sometimes manages to bring home a very powerful message by a few gentle words.

I am supported in my Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* by my wife, Pranati, who has not only been most supportive of this change in my life but who also regularly chants and worships the Lord with unfailing regularity. In fact, her unfailing devotion and regularity have induced me to form similar steady habits. Our worship of Lord Kṛṣṇa is now the central point of our lives. Other activities are secondary and are only to ensure proper service to Lord Kṛṣṇa in whatever limited way we can.

I am still reading the same copy of the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* I picked up twenty-seven years ago. I have rebound it and use it with much care, lest it fall apart. Over the years, I have always maintained a stock of *Gītās* to gift to receptive candidates across the spectrum, including my nondevotee friends, friends belonging to other faiths, and new friends from other countries. I request them to read a few pages every day, keep the book in a clean place, and give it due respect.

Had I held a copy of the *Gītā* in my hand years earlier, my whole life might have been different. I might have not wasted my youth and early years in frivolous and fruitless pastimes, but perhaps been a more useful person to society by performing devotional service truly and properly. But, I suppose, better late than never. It has been a long and sometimes painful journey up to this point, partly because of my own ignorance, and partly because of illusion, which tries to lure us into indiscretions. Now that the Lord has taken hold of me, in spite of my interminable bouts with the modes of passion and ignorance I am sure He shall have mercy on me, make me a more sincere devotee, and make me a little more productive in helping His true servants in spreading Kṛṣṇa *bhakti* to one and all.

After I ceased casual social mingling, many of my friends drifted away slowly. But the Lord stood by Me and did not allow me to feel lonely. My loss of school and college friends was gradually filled by new devotee friends with whom my connection is Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*. Also, by the special grace of the Lord, I am sure, most of my old friends have drifted back into my ken, and I connect with them, but with a new perspective. None of my old friends now drink liquor or eat meat in my presence, in deference to my views.

I completed my studies in chemical engineering at IIT Mumbai thirty-five years ago. Most of my life

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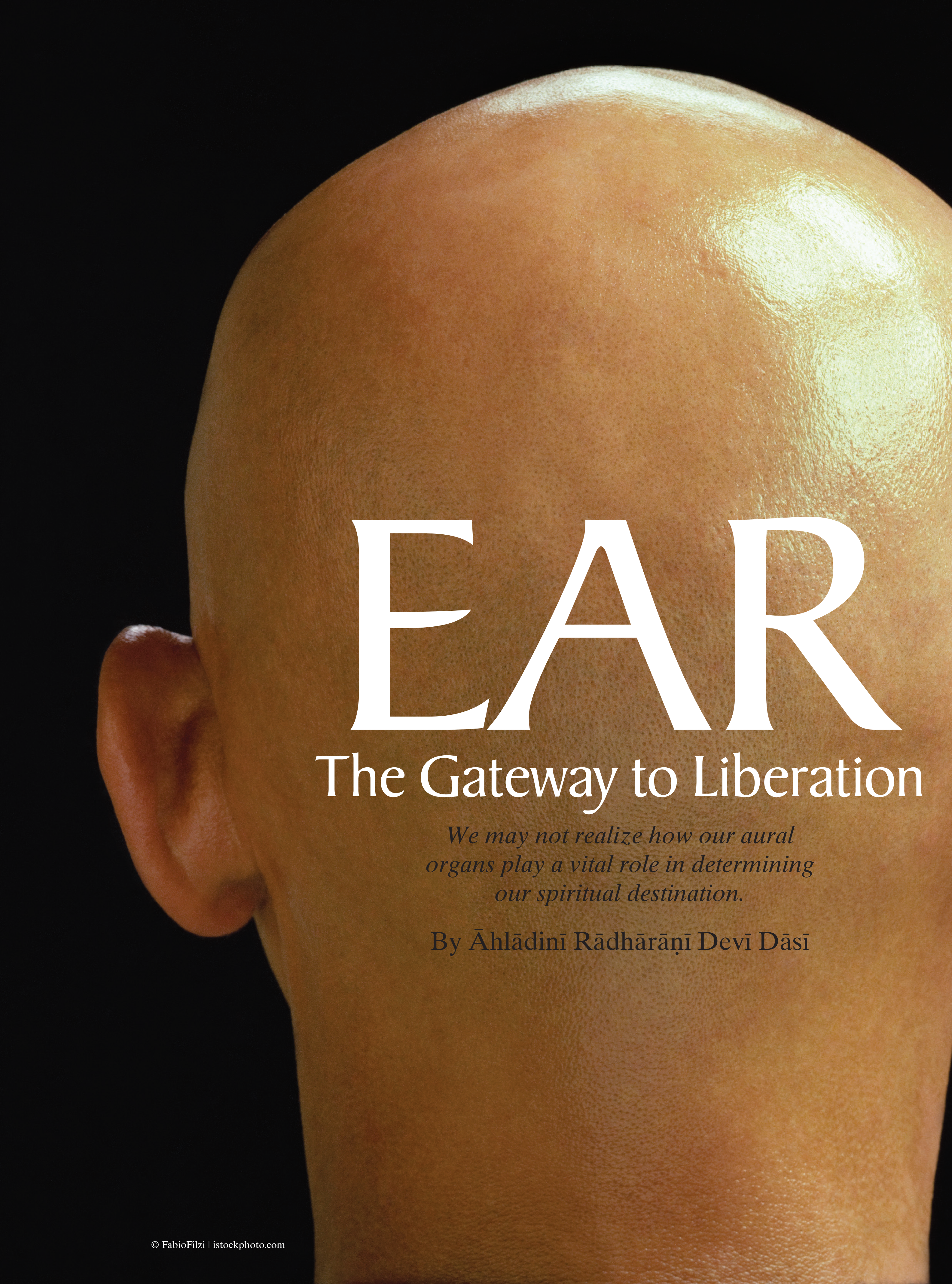

EAR
The Gateway to Liberation

We may not realize how our aural organs play a vital role in determining our spiritual destination.

By Āhlādinī Rādhārāṇī Devī Dāsī

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THE HUMAN BODY is equipped with five senses through which one is connected to the external world. These five knowledge-acquiring organs, known in the *Vedas* as *jñānendriyas* (*jñāna,* "knowledge"; *indriya,* "senses"), are the ears, eyes, tongue, nose, and skin. Through them we receive information about the external world, and based on that information we act and react.

Among these senses, the ears are more active than the other four. Śrīla Prabhupāda explained the superior status of the ears:

> Suppose you are sleeping. Then all your senses are also sleeping. But the ear does not sleep. When a man is sleeping and somebody is coming to kill him, so what do you say? You cry, "Mr. such and such, wake up! Wake up! There is danger." Otherwise, all the senses are there, but only the ear will help you. The eyes are there, hands are there, legs are there, everything is there—none of these limbs, these parts of your body, will help you. Simply your ear will help you when you are in danger. (Lecture, San Francisco, July 21, 1975)

mad-yājī māṁ namaskuru

Even the softest noise can be enough to wake a sleeping person.

Hearing Spiritual Sound

Usually people take great interest in hearing about mundane topics, reading newspapers and magazines or watching television. Thanks to the Internet now anyone from any corner of the world can access information, listen to music, or watch videos simply by pushing a button. But *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.1.2) condemns hearing mundane topics devoid of spiritual value:

śrotavyādīni rājendra
nṛṇāṁ santi sahasraśaḥ
apaśyatām ātma-tattvaṁ
gṛheṣu gṛha-medhinām

"Those persons who are materially engrossed, being blind to the knowledge of ultimate truth, have many subject matters for hearing in human society, O Emperor." In commenting on this, Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "They have many subject matters for hearing—political, scientific, social, economic, and so on—but due to a poor fund of knowledge, they set aside the question of the ultimate miseries of life, namely miseries of birth, death, old age, and disease. Factually, the human life is meant for making an ultimate solution to birth, death, old age, and disease, but the *gṛhamedhīs* [ignorant householders], being illusioned by the material nature, forget everything about self-realization."

Just as red-hot cinders may smolder beneath a pile of hot ashes, love of God, though hidden, burns within the heart of every living entity.

In spiritual circles hearing is the most highly regarded means for self-realization. The Vedic scriptures, especially the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* consistently glorify the importance of hearing divine sound to achieve the highest spiritual perfection. Just as a sleeping man can be roused by sound, a man who is spiritually asleep, deep in the slumber of ignorance, can be woken up by transcendental, spiritual sound. Such sound will awaken him to spiritual consciousness.

For that reason ears are considered the gateway to the spiritual world, because by letting the right sound enter our ears, we open the doorway to liberation. If we are fortunate enough to hear transcendental sound—the vibration of Kṛṣṇa's holy names or glorification of Kṛṣṇa and His devotees—then the ears open the door to our hearts so that the Lord may enter. Śrīla Prabhupāda writes, "The first and foremost of such devotional engagements is hearing about Kṛṣṇa. This is a very powerful transcendental method for purging the mind of all misgivings. The more one hears about Kṛṣṇa, the more one becomes enlightened and detached from everything that draws the mind away from Kṛṣṇa." (*Bhagavad-gītā* 6.35, Purport)

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, while spreading the *saṅkīrtana* movement all over India, would plead with everyone He met, saying, "Wake up, sleeping souls! You have slept so long in the lap of the witch Māyā. I have brought the medicine to destroy her illusions. Now pray for this *hari-nāma mahā-mantra* and take it."

Just as red-hot cinders may smolder beneath a pile of hot ashes, love of God, though hidden, burns within the core of the heart of every living entity. And just as blowing air on hot cinders can rekindle a flame, hearing the glories of the Lord can invoke one's dormant love of God and revive one's connection to Him.

Step-by-Step Effects of Hearing

When the sweet pastimes of the Lord, emanating from the mouths of pure devotees in the form of transcendental vibrations, pass through the ears and enter the heart, we feel relief from the burning miseries of material existence, just as one is soothed by a rain shower in the hot desert. By hearing about God's activities one receives His mercy and gradually feels inspired to serve Him with love. *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (1.2.17–21) systematically describes how our devotion to Kṛṣṇa gradually evolves when we submissively hear the transcendental vibrations of Kṛṣṇa's holy names and pastimes:

> Śrī Kṛṣṇa, the Personality of Godhead, who is the Paramātmā [Supersoul] in everyone's heart and the benefactor of the truthful devotee, cleanses desire for material enjoyment from the heart of the devotee who has developed the urge to hear His messages, which are in themselves virtuous when properly heard and chanted. By regular attendance in classes on the *Bhāgavatam* and by rendering of service to the pure devotee, all that is troublesome to the heart is almost completely destroyed, and loving service unto the Personality of Godhead, who is praised with transcendental songs, is established as an irrevocable fact. As soon as irrevocable loving service is established in the heart, the effects of nature's modes of passion and ignorance, such as lust, desire, and hankering, disappear from the heart. Then the devotee is established in goodness, and he becomes completely happy. Thus established in the mode of unalloyed goodness, the man whose mind has been enlivened by contact with devotional service to the Lord gains positive scientific knowledge of the Personality of Godhead in the stage of liberation from all material association. Thus the knot in the heart is pierced, and all misgivings are cut to pieces. The chain of fruitive actions is terminated when one sees the self as master.

Prahlāda, the great boy saint, also recommends hearing above all other methods of devotional service. This is because hearing the pastimes and glories of the Lord is the basis of devotional service. It is through hearing that the Lord, in the form of sound, enters our hearts; the other processes subsequently follow. When with faith we hear potent spiritual discussion of Kṛṣṇa's glorious activities from bona fide sources, all inauspiciousness within the heart is destroyed like weeds yanked from a patch of earth. Gradually, in this fertile soil, the seed of true love for God takes root and germinates.

One who is genuinely humble and who has total faith in the words of the scriptures can achieve this love for the Lord. One need not be highly intelligent, well educated, wealthy, or advanced in years. It is not necessary to be a man or a woman, to be from a high caste or a low one. The only criterion is that one should, with faith and surrender, hear the transcendental message of the Lord.

Divine Sound For the Modern Age

The Vedic scriptures have recorded some of the most important of Kṛṣṇa's unlimited pastimes. And among all the Vedic scriptures, two are considered most important, especially in the current age: the *Bhagavad-gītā* and *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* The *Gītā* is the essence of all *Upaniṣads* because it is spoken by the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Kṛṣṇa Himself; the *Bhāgavatam* is considered the "ripe fruit of all Vedic literature." If enough time is devoted to hearing and discussing these two scriptures, going back to Godhead is assured.

In addition, Lord Caitanya advised chanting the most powerful mantra for this age, the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra,* as the best means to counteract the degrading influence of the Age of Kali. The holy name of the Lord is the incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa in Kali-yuga: *kali-kāle nāma-rūpe kṛṣṇa-avatāra* (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 17.22). It is all-powerful, even able to completely eradicate negative qualities like lust, anger, greed, envy, and false ego, which are the main causes of distress in the material world.

Dangers in Hearing

All that being said, we must carefully choose from whom we hear, because hearing from unauthorized sources can disastrously affect our spiritual lives. The *Padma Purāṇa* strictly warns us against hearing from nondevotees:

avaiṣṇava-mukhodgīrṇaṁ
pūtaṁ hari-kathāmṛtam
śravaṇaṁ naiva kartavyaṁ
sarpocchiṣṭaṁ yathā payaḥ

"One should not hear anything about Kṛṣṇa from a non-Vaiṣṇava. Milk touched by the lips of a serpent has poisonous effects; similarly, talks about Kṛṣṇa given by a non-Vaiṣṇava are also poisonous." Śrīla Prabhupāda elaborates: "The words or songs of a person not fixed in Vaiṣṇava behavior, not strictly following the rules and regulations and chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, should not be accepted by pure devotees."

Furthermore, Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura says that a practitioner of devotional service should never hear blasphemy of Lord Kṛṣṇa or Vaiṣṇavas. Wherever such noxious words are spoken, a devotee should immediately leave that place. One who, due to a weak heart and the fear of upsetting others, hears blasphemy of Kṛṣṇa and the Vaiṣṇavas gradually falls from the platform of devotional service.

The act of hearing, although simple, can award the highest perfection: pure love of God and eternal service to Him. Numerous examples testify to this. King Parīkṣit and Queen Rukmiṇī, for example, are celebrated in the scriptures for their ardent hearing. Just to afford the transcendent opportunity that hearing offers, Śrīla Prabhupāda established in all ISKCON temples the daily discussion of *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* and *Bhagavad-gītā,* and anyone can come to the temple and hear the transcendental messages of the scriptures. It behooves us all to take advantage of this process and thus prepare the way for our final journey—to go back to Godhead.

Āhlādinī Rādhārāṇī Devī Dāsī is a housewife in Mumbai and has been practicing Kṛṣṇa consciousness since 1999. She and her husband, Divya Puruṣa Dāsa, are disciples of His Holiness Lokanātha Swami Mahārāja. She regularly writes articles in Marathi for a local newsletter.

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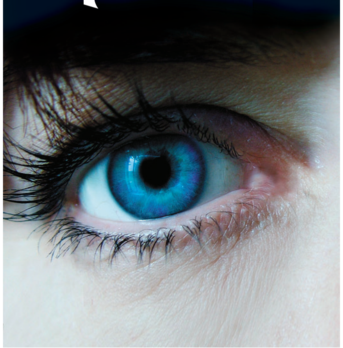

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Leave Godmen, Accept God

By Murāri Gupta Dāsa

Yamarāja Dāsa

AT ANY GIVEN time in India, a number of holy men claim they can cure all by their mystical powers. One such miracle man is in the news for all the wrong reasons. First the media and now the police are accusing him of spreading superstitions, charging money for his cures, and cheating. His faithful followers swear by his magical powers.

What is the truth? Can this miracle man see the past, predict the future, heal the sick, and give mercy through his supernatural powers? Or is he a crook?

Our answer may surprise you. He might possess supernatural powers, as many others like him do. Mystic powers that are beyond you, me, and modern science do exist. Śrīla Prabhupada explains: "There are eight kinds of yogic perfection (*siddhis*): *aṇimā, laghimā, prāpti, īśitva, vaśitva, mahimā, prākāmya,* and *kāmāvasāyitā.* A real yogi can become smaller than the smallest, lighter than the lightest, and bigger than the biggest. Whatever he wants he can produce immediately in his hand. He can even create a planet." (*Teachings of Lord Kapila,* Verse 13, Purport)

So what? Do such powers make such yogis God? No. God is God, the supreme controller, enjoyer, and proprietor, the most beautiful, the all-attractive—Kṛṣṇa.

But then why do people decide to turn to these godmen and not God? Lord Kṛṣṇa explains their psychology in the *Bhagavad-gītā* (4.12): "Men in this world desire success in fruitive activities, and therefore they worship the demigods. Quickly, of course, men get results from fruitive work in this world." Śrīla Prabhupāda elaborates in his purport, "To achieve such temporary things, people worship the demigods or powerful men in human society." Nothing wrong here, we may feel; it's a simple case of demand and supply. But surprisingly, Lord Kṛṣṇa calls this approach less intelligent. (*Bg.* 7.20) Because there's a catch: These boons and solutions are temporary, lasting only a short while. They are not eternal and are surely not powerful enough to help us escape the cycle of birth and death.

If we are sick and we eat some magical ash, we may find benefit. But if this simple cure turns us into swooning followers of miracle men, we are in for a rude shock. Either their powers will dwindle or, being mere mortals, they will have to succumb to all-powerful time and death. What, then, will be our shelter?

Surrender to Lord Kṛṣṇa

If we are still in awe of mystic powers, let's see how Śrīla Prabhupāda responded to such cases. When told about someone's mystic feats like levitation, he dismissed them by saying that even cockroaches fly. (*TKG's Diary: Prabhupada's Final Days,* July 26) Challenging those who claim to be God, he would often say, "When there is some tooth pain, you go to the doctor, and you are God?"

Śrīla Prabhupāda's point was simple: Instead of surrendering to these fallible miracle men, surrender to Kṛṣṇa, who is infallible. He is *yogeśvara,* the master of all yogic powers and the original source from whom all powerful persons derive their power.

Therefore the *Bhāgavatam* (2.3.10) implores us to be prudent and turn to Kṛṣṇa: "A person who has broader intelligence, whether he be full of all material desire, without any material desire, or desiring liberation, must by all means worship the supreme whole, the Personality of Godhead."

But we may have our doubts. Will Kṛṣṇa free us from our terrible sufferings?

Like these miracle men, Lord Kṛṣṇa may remove our miseries—or He may not. But He will surely strengthen us enough to bear them. Our apparent lack of direct access to Lord Kṛṣṇa may also give us reservations. But thanks to a mentorship process He has arranged, as He mentions in the *Gītā* (4.2), we can access His wonderful teachings through His bona fide representatives. These spiritual masters can guide us to live a holistic and harmonious life even in these turbulent times. The process is simple—mindful meditation on the holy names of the Lord: Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare. We can chant this mantra anytime, anywhere. It can deliver us from this world of miseries and take us to Vaikuntha, the place of all peace and love.

Try it. It's free.

Murāri Gupta Dāsa, a disciple of His Holiness Rādhānātha Swami, has a Bachelor's degree in medicine and surgery (MBBS) and is a member of the production team of the English edition of BTG in India. His blog: http://diaryofmgd.blogspot.in/

Behind The Scene

By Viśākhā Devī Dāsī

ARMED WITH chutzpah and other people's credit, Marc Dreier, a graduate of Yale University and Harvard Law School, hatched one ingenious scam after another and used the proceeds to maintain a lavish lifestyle, including owning a $10 million apartment on Manhattan's Upper East Side, beachfront properties in the Hamptons, a valuable art collection, several expensive cars, and an $18 million yacht.

Before he began committing his crimes, Mr. Dreier earned about $400,000 a year. So, one may ask, why did Mr. Dreier engage in fraud? The *Bhagavad-gītā* explains that a person in the grips of the mode of passion (*raja guṇa*) has unlimited desires and longings.

A *guṇa* is a quality that, due to our desires and activities, entraps us. In the case of Mr. Dreier, after pleading guilty to his crimes he wrote a letter to the judge explaining that he began stealing in 2002, taking money from the settlement proceeds owed to a client. He had hoped to repay the money quickly, but instead he stepped into "a quicksand of spending" and found himself "running a massive Ponzi scheme with no apparent way out."

When there is an increase in the mode of passion, the *Gītā* tells us, uncontrollable greed develops.

In his letter, Mr. Dreier also told the judge that colleagues and clients were doing "better financially and seemingly enjoying more status" than he was, and he felt "crushed by a sense of underachievement."

A person in the grip of passion is never satisfied with the position he or she has, covets higher positions and more possessions, and becomes disturbed by not having them and envious of those who do. Then, the intelligence smothered, that person ignores morality.

Or, in Mr. Dreier's words, "I can't remember or imagine why I didn't stop myself. It all seems

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so obviously deplorable now. I recall only that I was desperate for some measure of the success that I felt had eluded me. I lost my perspective and my moral grounding, and really, in a sense, I just lost my mind."

Greed, the *Gītā* tells us, is one of three gates to hell, and any action done under its influence tastes like nectar in the beginning and poison at the end.

Mr. Dreier was convicted of fraud for bilking hedge funds and other investors out of at least $400 million and was sentenced to twenty years in prison.

He commented: "It's easy to say you would never cross the line, but the line is presented to very few people."

And it's true. Anyone can succumb to greed—and have to experience the misery it brings.

There is a bright side, however. Anyone, including Mr. Dreier, who is sixty-two and may spend the rest of his life in prison, can reflect on and learn from the glorious *Gītā.* This passage, for example, from Śrīla Prabhupāda's purport to *Bhagavad-gītā* 14.17, could give all of us pause: "In the mode of passion, people become greedy, and their hankering for sense enjoyment has no limit. One can see that even if one has enough money and adequate arrangements for sense gratification, there is neither happiness nor peace of mind. That is not possible, because one is situated in the mode of passion. If one wants happiness at all, his money will not help him. . . ." ❁

Viśākhā Devī Dāsī has been contributing articles and photographs to BTG for almost forty years. She and her husband, Yaduvara Dāsa, have lived at Saranagati Village, a Hare Kṛṣṇa community in British Columbia, Canada, since 1999. For more information, visit her website: http://our-spiritual-journey.com.

SOLACE IN KṚṢṆA

(*continued from page 19*)

has been spent in projects of marketing and business development—all material activities, far removed from spiritual life. I am presently engaged in business development and investment in a few African countries and some other countries. In the course of my material activities, I discuss many subjects pertaining to current affairs, technology, management, literature, music, movies, sports, and so on. Yet I have discovered that the subject for discussion closest to my heart is Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa *bhakti.* Many of my friends from student days frown at my present beliefs or leanings. I do not worry, and I let them go their separate ways, though I do not hesitate to forward some write-up of Lord Kṛṣṇa to them all, even though they might not like it. Perhaps some day the little bud might get a chance to flower.

The devotees in the editorial department of BTG (India) have shown me special mercy by allowing me to be a part of their team, in whatever insignificant or small way, and stay connected to the service of Lord Kṛṣṇa.

I recall this verse from the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā* (10.9): "The thoughts of My pure devotees dwell in Me, their lives are surrendered to Me, and they derive great satisfaction and bliss enlightening one another and conversing about Me." When I am disconsolate, thinking about my own lack of devotion, I recall this verse and take solace in the idea that the Lord considers me at least an imperfect devotee, if not a perfect one. Even if I spend just a little time in thinking about Him, discussing Him, writing about Him, remembering His pastimes, or thinking of His devotees, He will enable me to stay connected to Him. That is His special mercy. And that is also the result of the special magic hidden within the pages of the *Śrīmad Bhagavad-gītā,* just waiting to leap out and envelop nondevotees in the cocoon of knowledge and *bhakti.* ❁

LOOKING FOR NEWS OF THE HARE KṚṢṆA MOVEMENT?

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Toronto's Festival of India in Photos

MADHAVA SMULLEN. PHOTOS BY BRIAN BATISTA BETTENCOURT | This year, celebrating its 40th anniversary, Festival of India hosted a series of public events, with more unique features than ever. ISKCON News takes a look at some of those highlights in photos.

D.C. Gardener Encourages City Temples to Go Green

MADHAVA SMULLEN | As environmentally-friendly living becomes more and more of a concern in a modern society where Earth's resources are fast running out, ISKCON has an increasing responsibility to set a good example.

ISKCON Invited for EU Commission President Meeting

KUMARI KUNTI SHERREITT | This year the Hindu Forum of Europe's (HFE) President Bharti Tailor with General Secretary Mahaprabhu Das (also the Director of ISKCON Communications Europe) represented the Hindu faith for this important meeting.

BOOK SECTION: ŚRĪMAD-BHĀGAVATAM

Referred to as “the ripe fruit of the tree of Vedic literature,” *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* is the most complete and authoritative exposition of Vedic knowledge. Five thousand years ago the great sage Kṛṣṇa Dvaipāyana Vyāsa composed this *purāṇa,* or history, to explain the essence of spiritual knowledge. Here we present *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* in serialized form, with the original Sanskrit text, transliteration, word meanings, translation, and purports by His Divine Grace A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness.

DHRUVA MEETS THE VIṢṆUDŪTAS

Having attained perfection in devotional service, Dhruva Mahārāja is qualified to go back to Godhead.

CANTO 4: CHAPTER 12

18 भक्तिं हरौ भगवति प्रवहन्नजस्र-
मानन्दबाष्पकलया मुहुरर्द्यमानः
विक्लिद्यमानहृदयः पुलकाचिताङ्गो
नात्मानमस्मरदसाविति मुक्तलिङ्गः

bhaktiṁ harau bhagavati pravahann ajasram
ānanda-bāṣpa-kalayā muhur ardyamānaḥ
viklidyamāna-hṛdayaḥ pulakācitāṅgo
nātmānam asmarad asāv iti mukta-liṅgaḥ

bhaktim—devotional service; *harau*—unto Hari; *bhagavati*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *pravahan*—constantly engaging in; *ajasram*—always; *ānanda*—blissful; *bāṣpa-kalayā*—by a stream of tears; *muhuḥ*—again and again; *ardyamānaḥ*—being overcome; *viklidyamāna*—melting; *hṛdayaḥ*—his heart; *pulaka*—standing of hairs; *ācita*—covered; *aṅgaḥ*—his body; *na*—not; *ātmānam*—body; *asmarat*—he remembered; *asau*—he; *iti*—thus; *mukta-liṅgaḥ*—free from the subtle body.

Because of his transcendental bliss, incessant tears flowed from his eyes, his heart melted, and there was shivering and standing of the hairs all over his body. Thus transformed, in a trance of devotional service, Dhruva Mahārāja completely forgot his bodily existence, and thus he immediately became liberated from material bondage.

PURPORT: Due to constant engagement in devotional service—hearing, chanting, remembering, worshiping the Deity, etc., as prescribed in nine varieties—there are different symptoms which appear in the body of a devotee. These eight bodily transformations, which indicate that a devotee is already liberated within himself, are called *aṣṭa-sāttvika-vikāra.*

When a devotee completely forgets his bodily existence, he should be understood to be liberated. He is no longer encaged in the body. The example is given that when a coconut becomes completely dry, the coconut pulp within the coconut shell separates from the bondage of the shell and the outer covering. By moving the dry coconut, one can hear that the pulp within is no longer attached to the shell or to the covering. Similarly, when one is fully absorbed in devotional service, he is completely disconnected from the two material coverings, the subtle and gross bodies.

Dhruva Mahārāja actually attained this stage of life by constantly discharging devotional service. He has already been described as a *mahā-bhāgavata,* for unless one becomes a *mahā-bhāgavata,* or a first-class pure devotee, these symptoms are not visible. Lord Caitanya exhibited all these symptoms. Ṭhākura Haridāsa also exhibited them, and there are many pure devotees who manifested such bodily symptoms. They are not to be imitated, but when one is actually advanced, these symptoms are exhibited. At that time it is to be understood that a devotee is materially free. ① Of course, from the beginning of devotional service the path of liberation immediately opens, just as the coconut taken from the tree immediately begins to dry; it simply takes some time for the shell and pulp to separate from one another.

An important word in this verse is *mukta-liṅgaḥ. Mukta* means "liberated," and *liṅga* means "the subtle body." ② When a man dies, he quits the gross body, but the subtle body of mind, intelligence, and ego carries him to a new body. While existing in the present body, the same subtle body carries him from one stage of life to another (for example, from childhood to boyhood) by mental development. The mental condition of a baby is different from that of a boy, the mental condition of a boy is different from that of a young man, and the mental condition of a young man is different from that of an old man. So at death the process of changing bodies takes place due to the subtle body; the mind, intelligence, and ego carry the soul from one gross body to another. This is called transmigration of the soul. But there is another stage, when one becomes liberated even from the subtle body; at that time the living entity is competent and fully prepared to be transferred to the transcendental or spiritual world.

The description of the bodily symptoms of Śrī Dhruva Mahārāja makes it apparent that he became perfectly fit to be transferred to the spiritual world. ③ One can experience the distinction between the subtle and gross bodies even daily; in a dream, one's gross body is lying on the bed while the subtle body carries the soul, the living entity, to another atmosphere. But because the gross body has to be continued, the subtle body comes back and settles in the present gross body. Therefore one has to become free from the subtle body also. This freedom is known as *mukta-liṅga.*

19 स ददर्श विमानाग्र्यं नभसोऽवतरद् ध्रुवः
विभ्राजयद्दश दिशो राकापतिमिवोदितम्

sa dadarśa vimānāgryaṁ
nabhaso 'vatarad dhruvaḥ
vibhrājayad daśa diśo
rākāpatim ivoditam

saḥ—he; *dadarśa*—saw; *vimāna*—an airplane; *agryam*—very beautiful; *nabhasaḥ*—from the sky; *avatarat*—descending; *dhruvaḥ*—Dhruva Mahārāja; *vibhrājayat*—illuminating; *daśa*—ten; *diśaḥ*—directions; *rākā-patim*—the full moon; *iva*—like; *uditam*—visible.

As soon as the symptoms of his liberation were manifest, he saw a very beautiful airplane coming down from the sky, as if the brilliant full moon were coming down, illuminating all the ten directions.

PURPORT: ④ There are different levels of acquired knowledge—direct knowledge, knowledge received from authorities, transcendental knowledge, knowledge beyond the senses, and finally spiritual knowledge. ⑤ When one surpasses the stage of acquiring knowledge by the descending process, he is immediately situated on the transcendental platform. Dhruva Mahārāja, being liberated from the material concept of life, was situated in transcendental knowledge and could perceive the presence of a transcendental airplane which was as brilliant as the full moonlight. This is not possible in the stages of direct or indirect perception of knowledge. Such knowledge is a special favor of the Supreme Personality of Godhead. One can, however, rise to this platform of knowledge by the gradual process of advancing in devotional service, or Kṛṣṇa consciousness.

20 तत्रानु देवप्रवरौ चतुर्भुजौ
श्यामौ किशोरावरुणाम्बुजेक्षणौ
स्थिताववष्टभ्य गदां सुवाससौ
किरीटहाराङ्गदचारुकुण्डलौ

tatrānu deva-pravarau catur-bhujau
śyāmau kiśorāv aruṇāmbujekṣaṇau
sthitāv avaṣṭabhya gadāṁ suvāsasau
kirīṭa-hārāṅgada-cāru-kuṇḍalau

tatra—there; *anu*—then; *deva-pravarau*—two very beautiful demigods; *catuḥ-bhujau*—with four arms; *śyāmau*—blackish; *kiśorau*—quite young; *aruṇa*—reddish; *ambuja*—lotus flower; *īkṣaṇau*—with eyes; *sthitau*—situated; *avaṣṭabhya*—holding; *gadām*—clubs; *suvāsasau* with nice garments; *kirīṭa*—helmets; *hāra*—necklaces; *aṅgada*—bracelets; *cāru*—beautiful; *kuṇḍalau*—with earrings.

Dhruva Mahārāja saw two very beautiful associates of Lord Viṣṇu in the plane. They had four hands and a blackish bodily luster, they were very youthful, and their eyes were just like reddish lotus flowers. They held clubs in their hands, and they were dressed in very attractive garments with helmets and were decorated with necklaces, bracelets, and earrings.

(1) How does Śrīla Prabhupāda compare liberation to a coconut?
(2) What carries a person to the next body?
(3) How can one experience the distinction between the subtle and gross bodies?
(4) What are the different levels of acquired knowledge?
(5) What happens when one surpasses the stage of acquiring knowledge by the descending process?

PURPORT: ⑥ The inhabitants of Viṣṇuloka are of the same bodily feature as Lord Viṣṇu, and they also hold club, conchshell, lotus flower, and disc. In this verse it is distinctly stated that they had four hands and were nicely dressed; the description of their bodily decorations corresponds exactly to that of Viṣṇu. So the two uncommon personalities who descended from the airplane came directly from Viṣṇuloka, or the planet where Lord Viṣṇu lives.

21 विज्ञाय तावुत्तमगायकिङ्करा-
वभ्युत्थितः साध्वसविस्मृतक्रमः
ननाम नामानि गृणन्मधुद्विषः
पार्षत्प्रधानाविति संहताञ्जलिः

vijñāya tāv uttamagāya-kiṅkarāv
abhyutthitaḥ sādhvasa-vismṛta-kramaḥ
nanāma nāmāni gṛṇan madhudviṣaḥ
pārṣat-pradhānāv iti saṁhatāñjaliḥ

vijñāya—after understanding; *tau*—them; *uttama-gāya*—of Lord Viṣṇu (of excellent renown); *kiṅkarau*—two servants; *abhyutthitaḥ*—stood up; *sādhvasa*—by being puzzled; *vismṛta*—forgot; *kramaḥ*—proper behavior; *nanāma*—offered obeisances; *nāmāni*—names; *gṛṇan*—chanting; *madhu-dviṣaḥ*—of the Lord (the enemy of Madhu); *pārṣat*—associates; *pradhānau*—chief; *iti*—thus; *saṁhata*—respectfully joined; *añjaliḥ*—with folded hands.

Dhruva Mahārāja, seeing that these uncommon personalities were direct servants of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, immediately stood up. But, being puzzled, in hastiness he forgot how to receive them in the proper way. Therefore he simply offered obeisances with folded hands and chanted and glorified the holy names of the Lord.

PURPORT: Chanting of the holy names of the Lord is perfect in every way. When Dhruva Mahārāja saw the Viṣṇudūtas, the direct associates of Lord Viṣṇu, four-handed and nicely decorated, he could understand who they were, but for the time being he was puzzled. But simply by chanting the holy name of the Lord, the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra, he could satisfy the uncommon guests who had all of a sudden arrived before him. The chanting of the holy name of the Lord is perfect; ⑦ even though one does not know how to please Lord Viṣṇu or His associates, simply by sincerely chanting the holy name of the Lord, everything becomes perfect. A devotee, therefore, either in danger or in happiness, constantly chants the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra. When he is in danger he is immediately relieved, and when he is in a position to see Lord Viṣṇu or His associates directly, by chanting this mahā-mantra he can please the Lord. This is the absolute nature of the *mahā-mantra.* Either in danger or in happiness, it can be chanted without limitation.

22 तं कृष्णपादाभिनिविष्टचेतसं
बद्धाञ्जलिं प्रश्रयनम्रकन्धरम्
सुनन्दनन्दावुपसृत्य सस्मितं
प्रत्यूचतुः पुष्करनाभसम्मतौ

taṁ kṛṣṇa-pādābhiniviṣṭa-cetasaṁ
baddhāñjaliṁ praśraya-namra-kandharam
sunanda-nandāv upasṛtya sasmitaṁ
pratyūcatuḥ puṣkaranābha-sammatau

tam—him; *kṛṣṇa*—of Lord Kṛṣṇa; *pāda*—of the lotus feet; *abhiniviṣṭa*—absorbed in thought; *cetasam*—whose heart; *baddha-añjalim*—with folded hands; *praśraya*—very humbly; *namra*—bowed; *kandharam*—whose neck; *sunanda*—Sunanda; *nandau*—and Nanda; *upasṛtya*—approaching; *sa-smitam*—smilingly; *pratyūcatuḥ*—addressed; *puṣkara-nābha*—of Lord Viṣṇu, who has a lotus navel; *sammatau*—confidential servants.

Dhruva Mahārāja was always absorbed in thinking of the lotus feet of Lord Kṛṣṇa. His heart was full with Kṛṣṇa. When the two confidential servants of the Supreme Lord, who were named Nanda and Sunanda, approached him, smiling happily, Dhruva stood with folded hands, bowing humbly. They then addressed him as follows.

PURPORT: In this verse the word *puṣkaranābha-sammatau* is significant. Kṛṣṇa, or Lord Viṣṇu, is known for His lotus eyes, lotus navel, lotus feet, and lotus palms. ⑧ Here He is called *puṣkara-nābha,* which means "the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has a lotus navel," and *sammatau* means "two confidential or very obedient servants." The materialistic way of life differs from the spiritual way of life in that one is disobedience and the other is obedience to the will of the Supreme Lord. All living entities are part and parcel of the Supreme Lord, and they are supposed to be always agreeable to the order of the Supreme person; that is perfect oneness.

⑨ In the Vaikuṇṭha world all the living entities are in oneness with the Supreme Godhead because they never defy His orders. Here in the material world, however, they are not *sammata,* agreeable, but always *asammata,* disagreeable. This human form of life is a chance to be

(6) What is most significant about the bodily features of the inhabitants of Viṣṇuloka?
(7) Even though one does not know how to please Lord Viṣṇu or His associates, how can one make everything perfect?
(8) What is the meaning of Kṛṣṇa's name Puṣkara-nābha?
(9) Why are the living entities in the Vaikuṇṭha world in oneness with the Supreme Godhead?

trained to be agreeable to the orders of the Supreme Lord. To bring about this training in society is the mission of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement. As stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā,* the laws of material nature are very strict; no one can overcome the stringent laws of material nature. But one who becomes a surrendered soul and agrees to the order of the Supreme Lord can easily overcome those stringent laws. The example of Dhruva Mahārāja is very fitting. Simply by becoming agreeable to the orders of the Supreme Personality of Godhead and by developing love of Godhead, Dhruva got the chance to personally meet the confidential servants of Lord Viṣṇu face to face. What was possible for Dhruva Mahārāja is possible for everyone. Anyone who very seriously engages in devotional service can obtain, in due course of time, the same perfection of the human form of life.

सुनन्दनन्दावूचतुः
23 भो भो राजन् सुभद्रं ते वाचं नोऽवहितः शृणु
यः पञ्चवर्षस्तपसा भवान्देवमतीतृपत्

sunanda-nandāv ūcatuḥ
bho bho rājan subhadraṁ te
vācaṁ no 'vahitaḥ śṛṇu
yaḥ pañca-varṣas tapasā
bhavān devam atītṛpat

sunanda-nandau ūcatuḥ—Sunanda and Nanda said; *bhoḥ bhoḥ rājan*—O dear King; *su-bhadram*—good fortune; *te*—unto you; *vācam*—words; *naḥ*—our; *avahitaḥ*—attentively; *śṛṇu*—hear; *yaḥ*—who; *pañca-varṣaḥ*—five years old; *tapasā*—by austerity; *bhavān*—you; *devam*—the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *atītṛpat*—greatly satisfied.

Nanda and Sunanda, the two confidential associates of Lord Viṣṇu, said: Dear King, let there be all good fortune unto you. Please attentively hear what we shall say. When you were only five years old, you underwent severe austerities, and you thereby greatly satisfied the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

PURPORT: What was possible for Dhruva Mahārāja is possible for anyone. Any five-year-old child can be trained, and within a very short time his life will become successful by realization of Kṛṣṇa consciousness. Unfortunately, this training is lacking all over the world. It is necessary for the leaders of the Kṛṣṇa consciousness movement to start educational institutions in different parts of the world to train children, starting at the age of five years. Thus such children will not become hippies or spoiled children of society; rather, they can all become devotees of the Lord. The face of the world will then change automatically.

24 तस्याखिलजगद्धातुरावां देवस्य शार्ङ्गिणः
पार्षदाविह सम्प्राप्तौ नेतुं त्वां भगवत्पदम्

tasyākhila-jagad-dhātur
āvāṁ devasya śārṅgiṇaḥ
pārṣadāv iha samprāptau
netuṁ tvāṁ bhagavat-padam

tasya—His; *akhila*—entire; *jagat*—universe; *dhātuḥ*—creator; *āvām*—we; *devasya*—of the Supreme Personality of Godhead; *śārṅgiṇaḥ*—who has the bow named Śārṅga; *pārṣadau*—associates; *iha*—now; *samprāptau*—approached; *netum*—to take; *tvām*—you; *bhagavat-padam*—to the position of the Supreme Personality of Godhead.

We are representatives of the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the creator of the whole universe, who carries in His hand the bow named Śārṅga. We have been specifically deputed to take you to the spiritual world.

PURPORT: In *Bhagavad-gītā* the Lord says that simply by knowing His transcendental pastimes (whether within this material world or in the spiritual world), anyone who understands factually who He is, how He appears, and how He acts can be immediately fit for transfer to the spiritual world. This principle stated in the *Bhagavad-gītā* operated in the case of King Dhruva. Throughout his life he tried to understand the Supreme Personality of Godhead by austerity and penances. Now, the mature result was that Dhruva Mahārāja became fit to be carried to the spiritual world, accompanied by the confidential associates of the Lord.

25 सुदुर्जयं विष्णुपदं जितं त्वया
यत्सूरयोऽप्राप्य विचक्षते परम्
आतिष्ठ तच्चन्द्रदिवाकरादयो
ग्रहर्क्षताराः परियन्ति दक्षिणम्

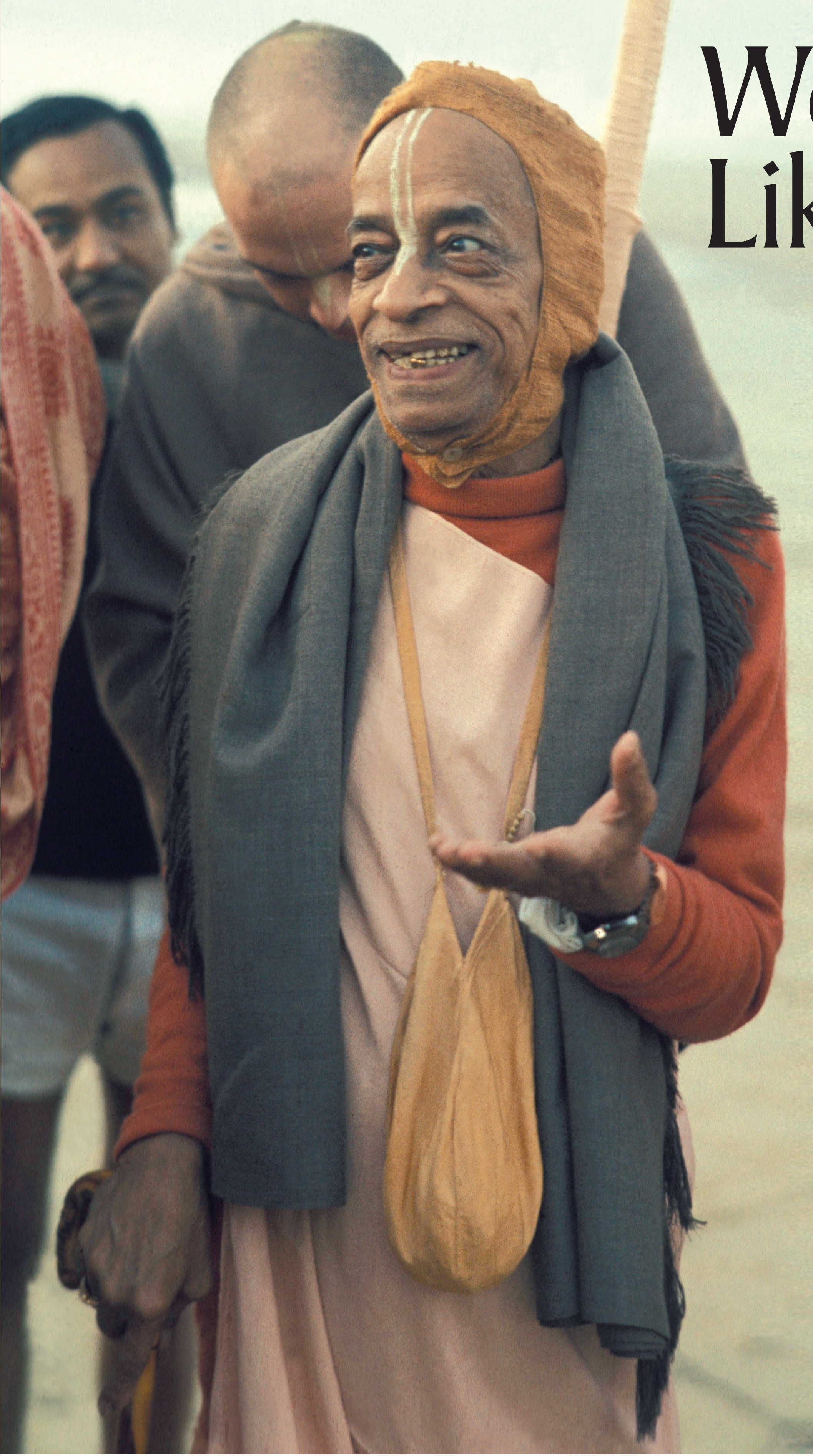
sudurjayaṁ viṣṇu-padaṁ jitaṁ tvayā
yat sūrayo 'prāpya vicakṣate param
ātiṣṭha tac candra-divākarādayo
graharkṣa-tārāḥ pariyanti dakṣiṇam

sudurjayam—very difficult to achieve; *viṣṇu-padam*—planet known as Vaikuṇṭhaloka or Viṣṇuloka; *jitam*—conquered; *tvayā*—by you; *yat*—which; *sūrayaḥ*—great demigods; *aprāpya*—without achieving; *vicakṣate*—simply see; *param*—supreme; *ātiṣṭha*—please come; *tat*—that; *candra*—the moon; *diva-ākara*—sun; *ādayaḥ*—and others; *graha*—the nine planets (Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto); *ṛkṣa-tārāḥ*—stars; *pariyanti*—circumambulate; *dakṣiṇam*—to the right.

[*Continued in the next issue.*]

ŚRĪLA PRABHUPĀDA SPEAKS OUT

Working Like Pigs



The following conversation between His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda and some of his disciples took place in September 1975 during an early-morning walk in Vrindvan, India.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Life can be easily maintained by agriculture and cow protection. But no, with great difficulty the leaders of the so-called modern civilization build big, big mills and factories to produce motor cars, skyscrapers, and so on. In the *Bhagavad-gītā* Lord Kṛṣṇa calls this *ugra-karma,* horrible activities. Unnecessarily creating problems, one after another.

For example, formerly paper was used only to print books of Vedic knowledge. Now paper is used for so many useless publications—volumes and volumes of newspapers, magazines, and sex books. Simply creating agitation of the mind. And if you explain these things, people will say, "These are all primitive ideas." The modern idea is that one must work very hard day and night just to get a little piece of chapati.

Disciple: If a person doesn't work hard day and night, they say, "You are just living off society."

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Pigs are also working day and night. Then what is the difference between the pig and me, if I am also working hard like the pig?

Disciple: There's no difference.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then why do you say that you have an advanced civilization? *Kaṣṭān kāmān na arhate:* the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* says it is not desirable; it is not good. You have been given a body different from that of the hogs so you can live peacefully and happily. Why should you accept *kaṣṭān kāmān,* so much hardship?

Actually, people do not want to work hard, Otherwise, why do the proprietors, the capitalists, leave the factory and go to a solitary place in the country whenever they can?

Disciple: They don't find any happiness in the hard work.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Then the other workers think, "This rascal has engaged us in hard work, and he's enjoying. Let us drive him out! Kill him!" This is communism. Everyone wants comfort and peaceful living. Therefore this civilization of hard work is condemned. If hard work is desirable, why are the capitalists avoiding it?

Disciple: They say they worked hard to get the comforts of life. Now they are relaxing.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: I am also relaxing. Why are you inducing me to work hard? Chant Hare Kṛṣṇa and take a little *prasāda.* That's all. Why are you inducing me?

Disciple: They say you have to earn your relaxation. You're not entitled to it unless you work very hard.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But earn or not earn, I am enjoying relaxation. If I am already enjoying, why should I pay for it? I have already paid for it. By my karma in my previous life I have already paid for it.

Disciple: They don't believe in the law of karma.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Therefore they are rascals, and this is a rascal civilization. On one side they promote contraceptives, and on the other side they encourage women to marry three times a week. This is their civilization. If you want to stop increasing the population, why are you inducing people: "Indulge in sex"? Everything is contradictory. And it is all based on sense gratification.

Disciple: If a person is not satisfying his senses, they think he is crazy.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: But who is actually satisfying his senses? You are crazy. In your attempt to satisfy your senses, you are repeatedly being kicked by nature, and your senses will never be satisfied. Still, you are trying for that. Even the eighty-year-old man is going to the nightclub. When will his senses be satisfied?

But if somebody is relaxing, calmly chanting Hare Kṛṣṇa and avoiding sense gratification, they will condemn him; "Oh, you are escaping reality."

Disciple: Misery loves company.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Yes. The world is working so hard, but where is the peace and happiness?

Disciple: It's coming.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: [*Laughs.*] When will it come? That is unknown.

Disciple: Maybe at the end of this century.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: Or maybe at the end of your life. Just like an insurance policy. You work hard and go on paying the premium, thinking you'll be happy after death. But if one is going to be a dog after death, how will he be happy?

Disciple: It is evident that the miseries of this age are becoming greater and greater.

Śrīla Prabhupāda: That must be, because people are all under nature's laws. How can they avoid the miseries? According to how they work in this life, they will get the result. *Karmaṇā daiva-netreṇa:* There is a superior power to supervise how they are working. Everyone is bound up tightly by the reactions of his previous work (*karma-bandhana*).

But people do not know this. They have a poor fund of knowledge. So Kṛṣṇa comes to inform these rascals: "You are all the lowest of men—fools." That is Kṛṣṇa's declaration. Therefore Kṛṣṇa says, "Surrender unto Me." This is the whole purpose of the *Bhagavad-gītā.*

As Kṛṣṇa sees, we see. This is Kṛṣṇa consciousness. We are not perfect. But we are perfect so long as we follow Kṛṣṇa. That's all. Suppose that I am a blind man: I am not perfect. But if you have got eyes—if you take me, and I follow you—then I am perfect. Kṛṣṇa assures, "You surrender to Me, and I will make you free from all dangers," and we accept Kṛṣṇa. Our method is very easy.

How to Put BTG in Your Will

After providing for their families and loved ones, subscribers may want to put *Back to Godhead* in their wills, thus helping to assure the long-term future of this work. In the USA, bequests are free of estate tax and can substantially reduce the amount of your assets claimed by the government.* You can give needed support for *Back to Godhead* by simply including the following words in your will: *I give, devise, and bequeath to* Back to Godhead, *18024 NW 112th Blvd., Alachua, FL 32615* (insert amount being given here) *to be used to support* Back to Godhead *and its related activities, including the Krishna.com website.*

A bequest can be a specific dollar amount, a specific piece of property, a percentage of an estate, or all or part of the residue of an estate. You can also name BTG as a contingency beneficiary in the event someone named in your will is no longer living.

It is recommended that a lawyer help in drafting or amending a will.

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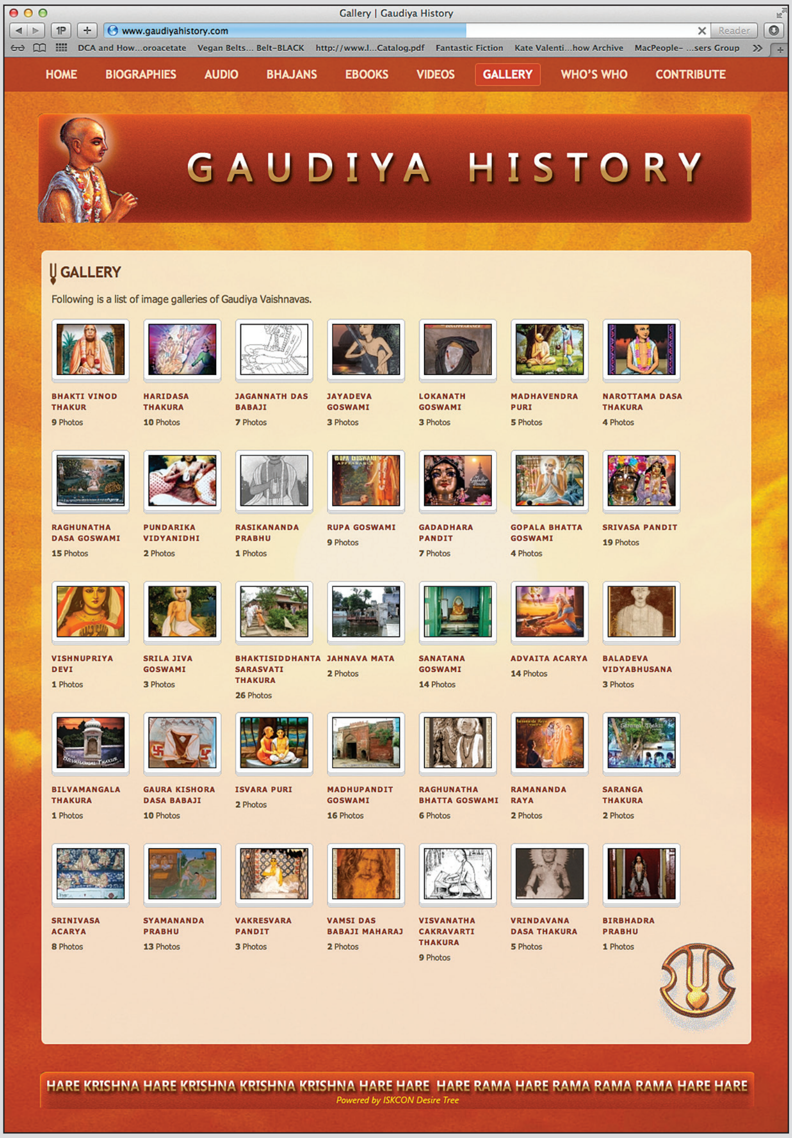
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www.gaudiyahistory.com is an encyclopedic online history of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava personalities. The site presents the histories and biographies of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas in audio, video, and text, including downloadable ebooks. The aim of gaudiyahistory.com is to inform devotees and glorify the rich lineage and tradition of the transcendental saints in the Gauḍīya *sampradāya.*

This web site will be of interest to beginners and to devotees of long standing. On the homepage is a series of links that lead to a set of questions that define the history and lineage of many Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavas.

The Biographies button takes you to an alphabetical list that includes such names as Śrīla Prabhupāda, Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī, and Sanātana Gosvāmī. Each of the names is a link to a page with information about the history and achievements of the particular *ācārya* you choose.

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The Video button leads to more than forty video talks by Caturātmā Dāsa, filled with information about the *ācāryas* and their activities.

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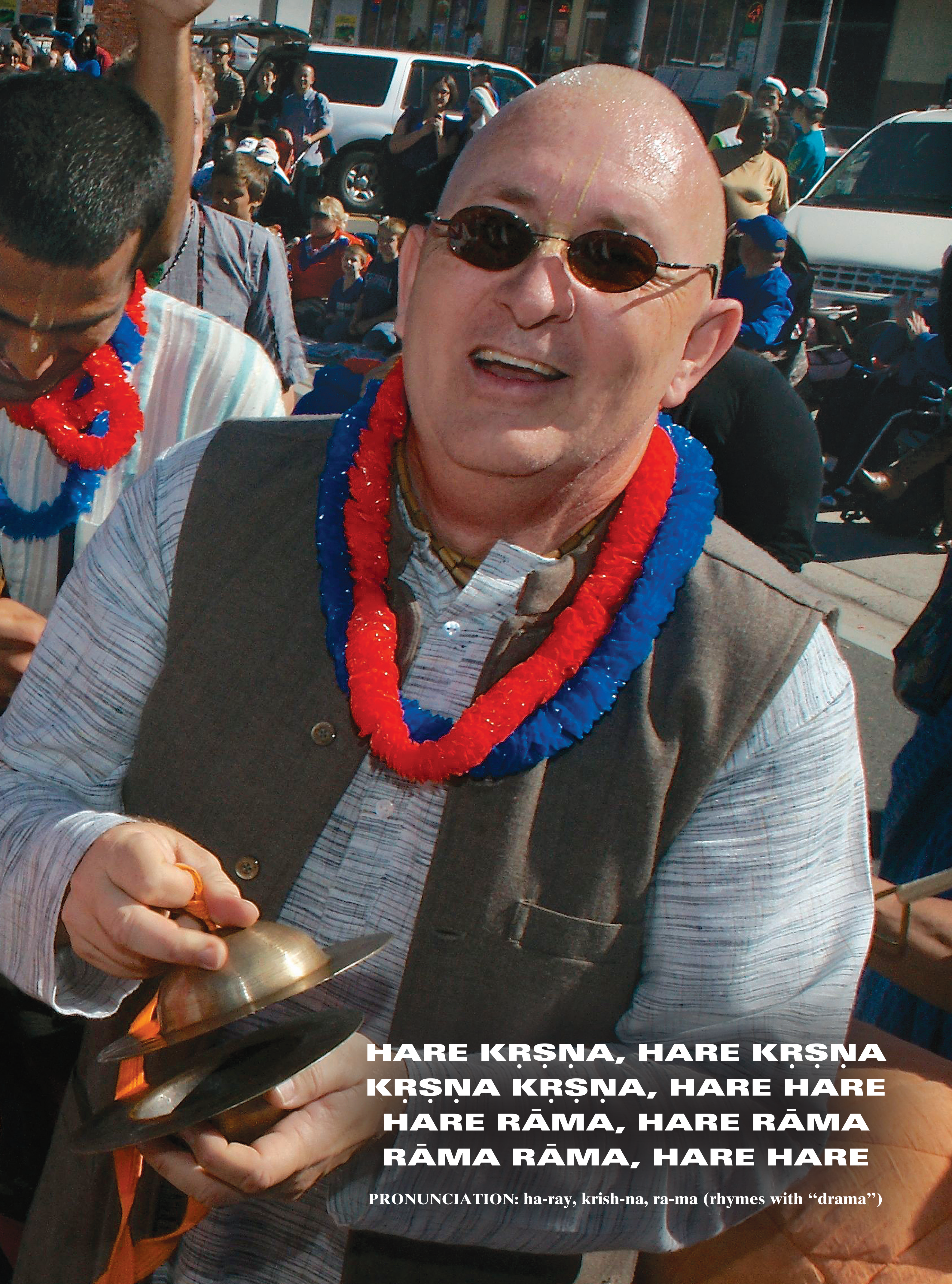
Finally, the Who's Who button leads to details about the identities of the *ācāryas* in Caitanya Mahāprabhu's and Kṛṣṇa's pastimes.—*Antony Brennan*

Photo by Yamarāja Dāsa



HARE KṚṢṆA, HARE KṚṢṆA
KṚṢṆA KṚṢṆA, HARE HARE
HARE RĀMA, HARE RĀMA
RĀMA RĀMA, HARE HARE

PRONUNCIATION: ha-ray, krish-na, ra-ma (rhymes with “drama”)

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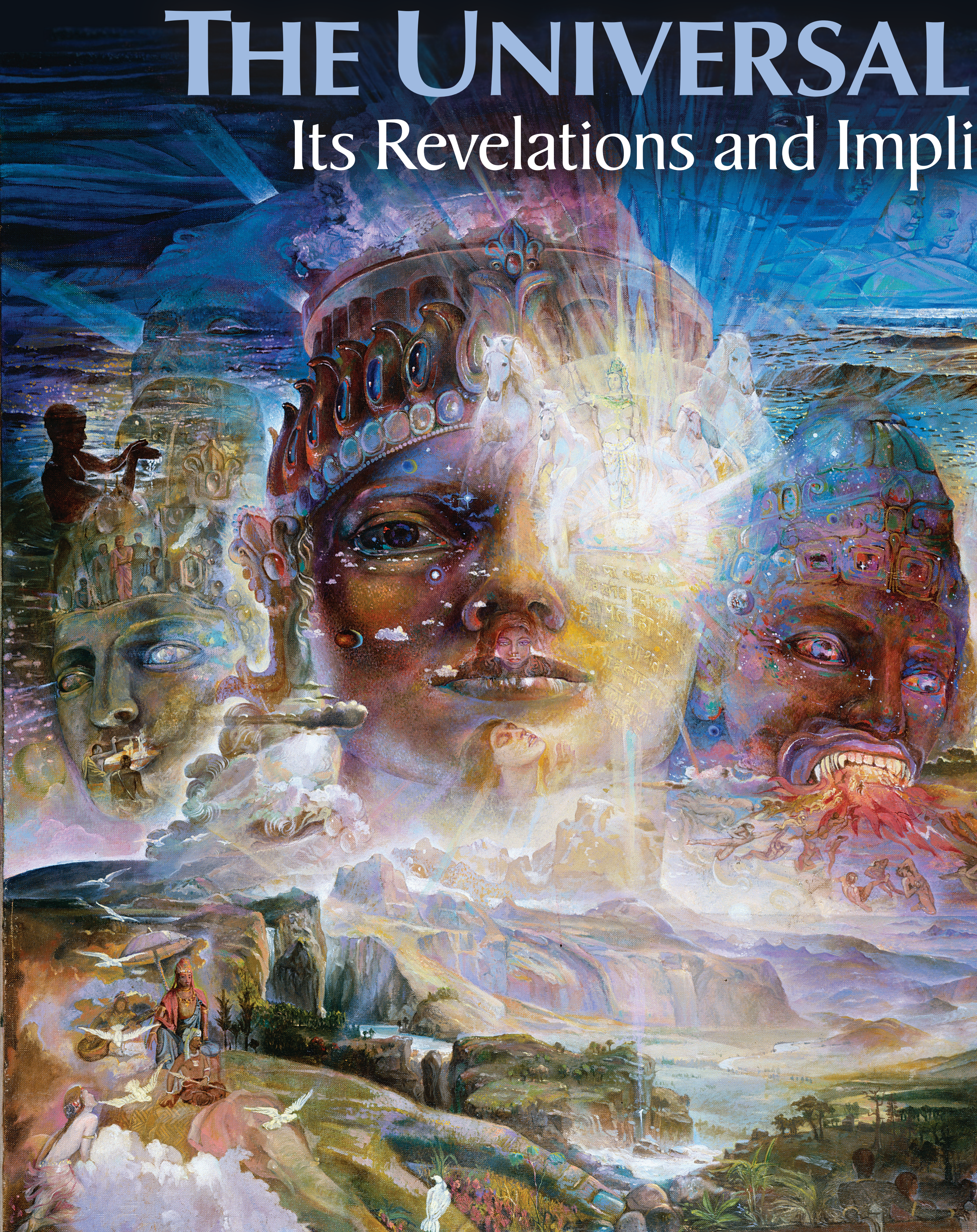

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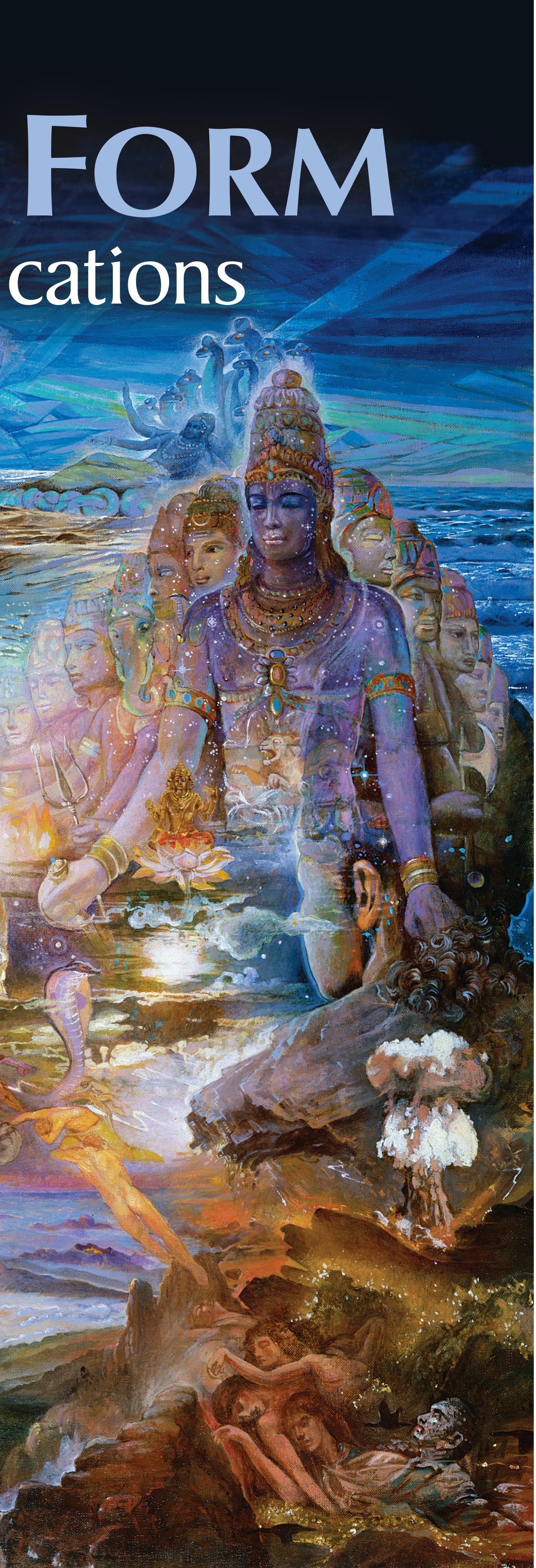


Painting by Janmālaya Dāsa

A review of Vaiṣṇava literature turns up five instances of Lord Kṛṣṇa's showing His form as the universe and everything in it.

By Satyarāja Dāsa

RAJIV AND I HAVE been friends for several years, and our exchanges often beckon the comedian in him. We relish a certain light-hearted banter that seems to always bring us closer. Sometimes, his sense of humor incorporates spiritual ideas. For example, he recently told me his life was absolutely perfect. In almost every area of endeavor, he said, the fates conspire for his pleasure. I asked why he thought this was so.

"Well, it's because I'm God, don't you know?"

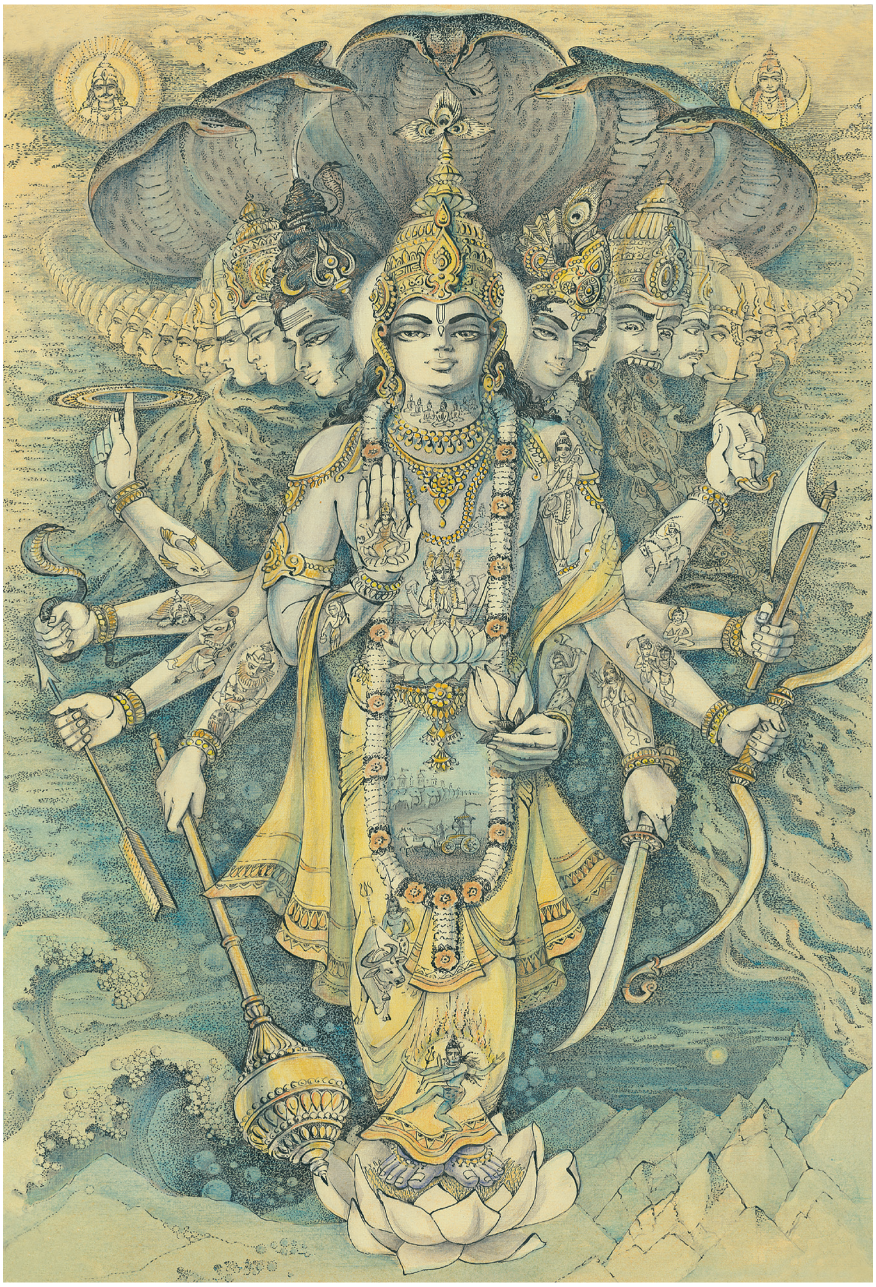
Although provoking laughter, his comment sparked a serious discussion, and we noted that in India, where Rajiv was born, one finds numerous "godmen" claiming to be some sort of manifestation of divinity.

The problem might be subtler in the West, but we have it here too. Many of us know egotists. Taken to an extreme, their thinking reveals itself as what I would call a severe "divinity issue," thinking oneself the ultimate enjoyer, the central purpose of the universe. If they don't say it directly, it is often an undercurrent or a subliminal attitude. Somehow the notion of being the Supreme looms large.

For this reason the great teachers of India have deemed it necessary to establish qualifying factors to determine who might legitimately be a manifestation of God—and who might not. I mentioned one approach in my conversation with Rajiv: Incarnations of God are predicted in the scriptures, I told him, often with specific details. Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, for example, is prophesied in the *Vāyu Purāṇa,* among other places, where we find that His mother, Śacī, is mentioned by name. This same text tells us the town in which He appeared, Navadwip, and His mission as well: to inaugurate the *saṅkīrtana* movement, or the movement centered on chanting the holy name. And when the scriptures aren't forthcoming with details, they describe bodily characteristics and personal attributes by which one can recognize an incarnation.

Introducing the Universal Form

But what interested my friend most was my description of Lord Kṛṣṇa's universal form (*virāṭ-rūpa*). Rajiv had read the *Bhagavad-gītā,* and he knew that Chapter Eleven focuses on Kṛṣṇa's revelation of His Godhood. Kṛṣṇa shows Arjuna an overwhelming mystical manifestation that includes creation and annihilation, multifarious



Painting by Devaki Devi Dāsi, from *Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead,* ©BBT International

This painting of the universal form appears in the latest Bhaktivedanta Book Trust edition of Kṛṣṇa: The Supreme Personality of Godhead.

living beings, all-devouring time, and the manifold material elements—all together in one place. What Rajiv had never thought about is this: The universal form is a good test to determine who is an incarnation and who isn't.

When I got home I emailed him a passage from Prabhupāda's commentary on the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* (2.1.24): "This *virāṭ-rūpa* of the Lord was especially manifested, not for the benefit of Arjuna, but for that unintelligent class of men who accept anyone and everyone as an incarnation of the Lord and so mislead the general mass of people. For them, the indication is that one should ask the cheap incarnation to exhibit his *virāṭ-rūpa* and thus be established as an incarnation."

Rajiv and I agreed that this would stop most people in their tracks. Asked if they could manifest something even remotely resembling the universal form as described in the *Gītā,* they would realize the silliness of their claim to divinity and accept their subservience to God, at least in theory if not in practice.

Rajiv wondered aloud: "Could Arjuna have imagined it? Is it possible that Kṛṣṇa had somehow managed to deceive him?"

This is not what the tradition teaches, and if one studies the relationship between Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna as expressed in the *Mahābhārata,* it becomes clear that there was deep love between them. Kṛṣṇa sought not to deceive Arjuna but to edify him, to enlighten him.

In addition, tricking someone like Arjuna, I told Rajiv, was unlikely. He was a highly posted government officer and widely respected, not only for his military abilities but also for his sober judgment and sound leadership. He could not easily be deceived or tricked into seeing a form that, ostensibly, included all aspects of existence, including things he couldn't possibly know, like the beginning of creation and the outcome of dissolution—and even the particulars of the war about to rage before him.

Rajiv nodded in agreement.

The Five Revelations

I further pointed out that Kṛṣṇa had shown the universal form to others, making it clear that this particular instance was not an aberration. Kṛṣṇa's manifest pastimes include five examples of this particular revelation.

Kṛṣṇa first revealed this form twice to His mother, Yaśodā. We read in the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam's* Tenth Canto (10.7.35–37) that when the child Kṛṣṇa once yawned happily, His mother saw in His mouth heaven and earth, stars, oceans, continents, and all moving and nonmoving things. A similar incident occurred soon thereafter, when her divine son happened to eat mud (10.8.37–39):

> When Kṛṣṇa opened His mouth wide by the order of mother Yaśodā, she saw within His mouth all moving and nonmoving entities, outer space, and all directions, along with mountains, islands,

> oceans, the surface of the earth, the blowing wind, fire, the moon, and the stars. She saw the planetary systems, water, light, air, sky, and creation by transformation of *ahaṅkāra.*
>
> She also saw the senses, the mind, sense perception, and the three qualities goodness, passion, and ignorance. She saw the time allotted for the living entities, she saw natural instinct and the reactions of karma, and she saw desires and different varieties of bodies, moving and nonmoving. Seeing all these aspects of the cosmic manifestation, along with herself and Vṛndāvana-dhāma, she became doubtful and fearful of her son's nature.

Being a gentle devotee who relishes an intimate relation with the Supreme, Yaśodā, like Arjuna, preferred to see Him in His adorable (and original) two-armed form as Kṛṣṇa, her loving son. The universal form establishes Lord Kṛṣṇa's Godhood for those on a rudimentary level of spirituality. The philosophical underpinnings of this truth are found sporadically in the first five cantos of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam,* where it is revealed that the universal form is a temporary manifestation of the Lord that embodies all created things. This is especially noted in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 1.3.30.[1]

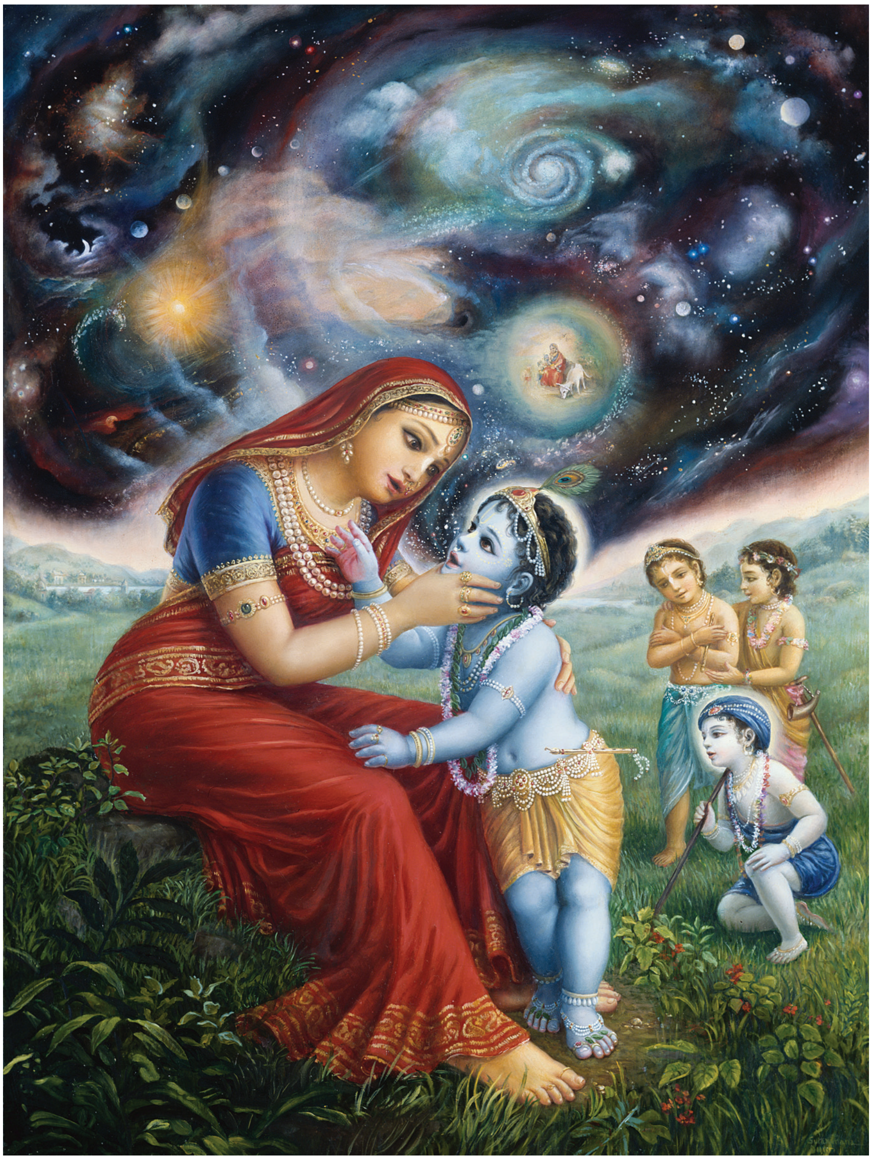
Why would the Lord show this form to superior devotees like Yaśodā and Arjuna? The answer is simple, as Prabhupāda stated earlier: Through them Kṛṣṇa would reveal the fact of His Godhood to future generations of nonbelievers and skeptics (people like me), hoping to give them faith.

After showing the form to mother Yaśodā on these two occasions, many years passed before Lord Kṛṣṇa would show it again. The third instance was in the assembly hall of the Kurus, as depicted in the *Mahābhārata's* fifth book. There, in the *Udyoga-parva,* we read that Kṛṣṇa arrived at the Kaurava court on a peace mission and tried to end the devastating Kurukshetra war before it could begin. Not only would Duryodhana not hear His words of reconciliation, but he ordered that Kṛṣṇa be arrested and tied with ropes. In reaction, the Lord laughed heartily and displayed a portion of the heart-stirring form He would later show to Arjuna.

Here it is described that Kṛṣṇa manifested innumerable arms, each with weapons that glowed with blinding light. In fact, His entire form looked like an erupting volcano, and from his lightning-like body a vast array of demigods issued forth, including Brahmā on His brow and Śiva on His breast. Indeed, His form displayed the essence of all entities, both great and small. Fire emanated from His mouth and from the pores of His skin, so He appeared like the rays of the sun.

Duryodhana, for one, could not look upon this devastatingly effulgent form, and the other Kaurava kings, too, closed their eyes in fear. Only Bhīṣma, Droṇa, Karṇa, Vidura, Sañjaya, and the sages present were able to behold this divine manifestation. The denizens of heaven showered flowers, and the sounds of kettledrums and conches vibrated in all directions.

The blind king Dhṛtarāṣṭra, father of Duryodhana, heard the commotion and prayed that Kṛṣṇa allow him, too, the vision bequeathed to the Kauravas. Kṛṣṇa granted him



Painting by Dhṛti Devī Dāsī

Lord Kṛṣṇa shows the universal form to His mother, Yaśodā.

momentary eyesight, giving him the divine ability to see the unseeable.

After bewildering the Kauravas, Lord Kṛṣṇa withdrew His universal form and, accompanied by Sātyaki and Kṛtavarma, left the palace, knowing that war was inevitable.

It was soon after this, just before the Battle of Kurukshetra, that Kṛṣṇa revealed the universal form in all its fullness to Arjuna. This was the fourth time He revealed it. I said earlier that the revelation in the Kaurava assembly hall was a partial manifestation. I now say "in all its fullness" because Prabhupāda indicates that the particular version displayed before the divine archer was unique:

Uttaṅka glorified Kṛṣṇa's many superlative attributes and beseeched Him to withdraw His overwhelming manifestation.

> No one had seen this universal form of the Lord before Arjuna, but because the form was shown to Arjuna, other devotees in the heavenly planets and in other planets in outer space could also see it. They did not see it before, but because of Arjuna they were able to see it. In other words, all the disciplic devotees of the Lord could see the universal form which was shown to Arjuna by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Someone commented that this form was shown to Duryodhana also when Kṛṣṇa went to Duryodhana to negotiate for peace. Unfortunately, Duryodhana did not accept the peace offer, but at that time Kṛṣṇa manifested some of His universal form. But those forms are different from this one shown to Arjuna. It is clearly said that no one has ever seen this form before. (*Bhagavad-gītā As It Is,* 11.47, Purport)[2]

In fact, many saw the universal form at the time of the battle, not just Arjuna. In famed commentator Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa's gloss on *Bhagavad-gītā* 11.20, he says:

> It is understood that now, for seeing the war, the *devas, asuras,* Gandharvas, Kinnaras, and others who were friendly or neutral had gathered. Not only Arjuna was given celestial eyes. They also were given celestial eyes by the Lord to see this form. If only Arjuna could see that form, it would have been like a sleeping person seeing chariots or other objects in a dream, while others could not see them. The Lord made this display so that many others could bear witness to His powers.

The Lord manifested His universal form to Uttaṅka in the *Mahābharata's* fourteenth book (*Aśvamedha-parva* 52–54). There we read that just after the war at Kurukshetra, Kṛṣṇa journeyed to Dwarka and on the way met an old friend, the sage Uttaṅka. They stopped to talk and Kṛṣṇa apprised him of the details of the war. Uttaṅka found it disconcerting that Kṛṣṇa did not stop the proceedings, since He certainly had the power to do so. As their conversation grew more heated, Uttaṅka threatened to curse the Lord with his yogic powers. But Kṛṣṇa told him that such a curse would be ineffectual, since, as God, He was the source of all mystic powers.

Uttaṅka doubted that Kṛṣṇa was powerful enough to avert the curse, and so he challenged Him:

"Is it so? Are You the universal Lord Himself? If so, please prove it to me."

Kṛṣṇa then manifested His *virāṭ-rūpa.* Uttaṅka was particularly blessed, for the *Mahābhārata* (14.54.4) tells us that he saw the same vision that Kṛṣṇa had previously shown Arjuna.

Awestruck, Uttaṅka glorified Kṛṣṇa's many superlative attributes and, as in the instances of Yaśodā and Arjuna, beseeched Him to withdraw His overwhelming manifestation. Kṛṣṇa did so, and then offered Uttaṅka a boon: He assured him that he would have water whenever he needed it and would never go thirsty.

The odd boon made sense when some years later Uttaṅka found himself in the desert. Almost dying of thirst, he was relieved when rain clouds mysteriously appeared, supplying water in his moment of need. Today in India, when clouds appear in the desert or during droughtlike conditions, they are referred to as "Uttaṅka's clouds" (*uttaṅka-megha*).

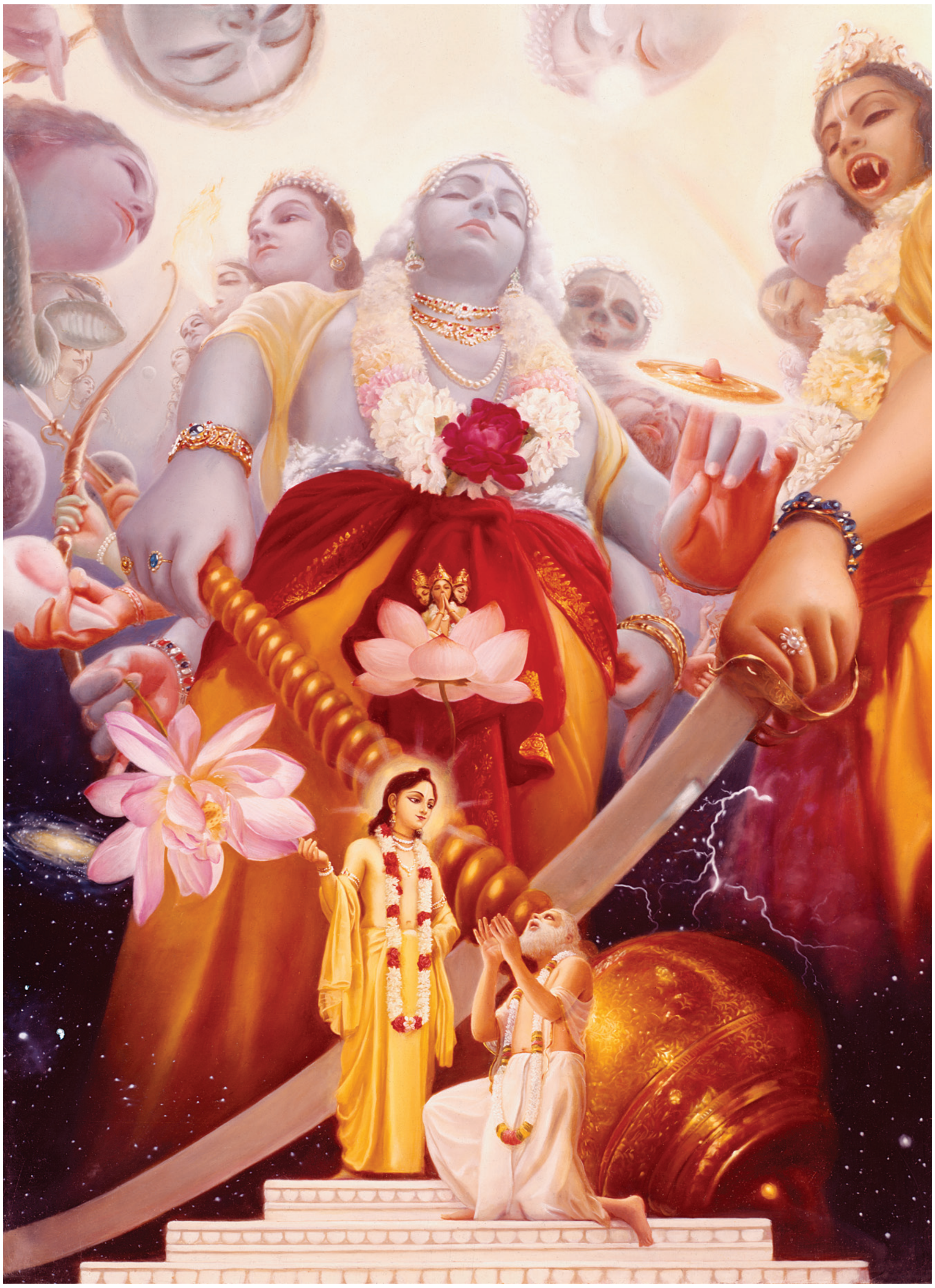
Rajiv reminded me that Vāmanadeva, another incarnation of Kṛṣṇa, once displayed the universal form before a great king (see Prabhupāda's commentary to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 8.21.5).

This brought to mind yet another instance of the revelation: Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu showed the universal form to His intimate devotees. *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi* 17.10) briefly mentions that Advaita Ācārya had a vision of the *virāṭ-rūpa. Caitanya-bhāgavata* (*Madhya* 14) elaborates, saying that both Śrī Advaita and Nityānanda Prabhu were privy to this confidential manifestation of the Supreme and upon seeing it danced like jubilant peacocks. They felt that because of this form the world would now become aware of Śrī Caitanya's divinity.

At the end of our discussion, I told Rajiv, "In the United States, Chapter Eleven refers to bankruptcy. And in the *Gītā,* Chapter Eleven implies a kind of bankruptcy, too—the spiritual bankruptcy of those who would claim to be God."

Satyarāja Dāsa, a disciple of Śrīla Prabhupāda, is a BTG associate editor and founding editor of the Journal of Vaishnava Studies. *He has written over thirty books on Kṛṣṇa consciousness and lives near New York City.*

Painting by Muralidhara Dāsa



Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu displays the universal form before Advaita Ācārya.

NOTES:

[1] The early cantos of the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* describe the *virāṭ-rūpa* in a more abstract way, though with vivid detail, revealing elaborate ways in which one might see God in nature. From this perspective, the *virāṭ-rūpa* constitutes a form of pantheism. But this is an additional aspect of the universal form and does not fully articulate the mystical vision revealed to Kṛṣṇa's great devotees. Still, according to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 2.2.1, Lord Brahmā, the first created being, meditated on this form before our current cosmic era came into existence. So, too, did Mārkaṇḍeya Ṛṣi, as retold in both the *Mahābhārata's Āraṅyaka-parva* (Chapters 187 and 188) and the *Bhāgavatam's* Twelfth Canto (Chapter Nine).

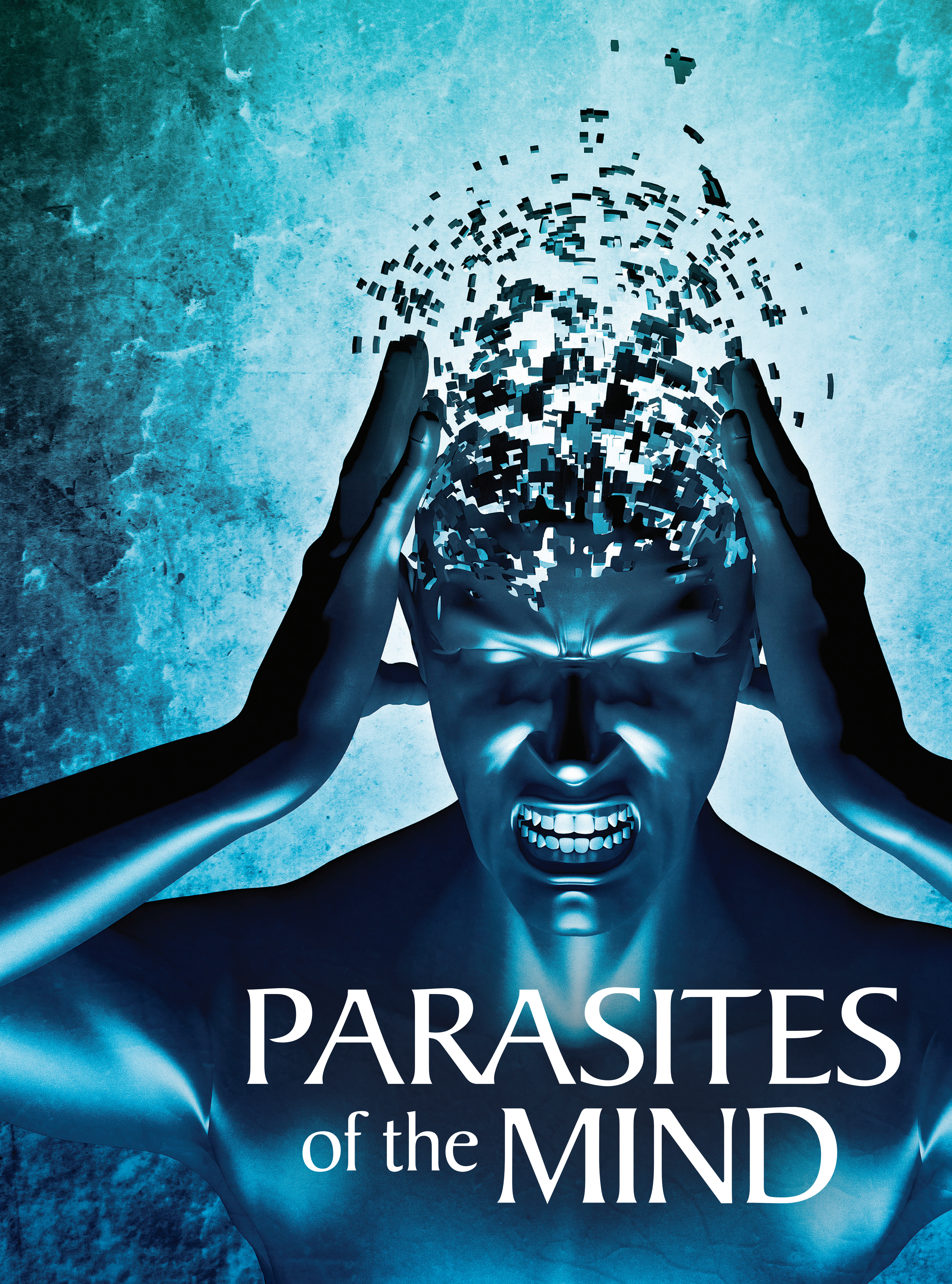
[2] To recap: We know from the *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* that mother Yaśodā saw the universal form, and the *Mahābhārata* tells us that when Kṛṣṇa went to the Kaurava assembly hall to negotiate for peace, He showed the universal form to Bhīṣma, Vidura, Droṇa, Karṇa, Sañjaya, and others. They all saw the form before Arjuna saw it. So can Kṛṣṇa really say to Arjuna, as He does in both texts 47 and 48 of the *Gītā's* Eleventh Chapter, that "no one before you has seen this"? (*tvad anyena,* "besides you"; *na dṛṣṭa-pūrvam,* "no one has previously seen") What could Kṛṣṇa possibly mean by this?

The commentator Śrīdhara Svāmī attempts to reconcile the issue by interpreting *tvad anyena* in 47 as *tvādṛśād bhaktād anyena* ("by someone other than a devotee like you"), meaning that only great devotees have seen it. This, of course, would allow for Yaśodā and others to have witnessed the form before Arjuna did.

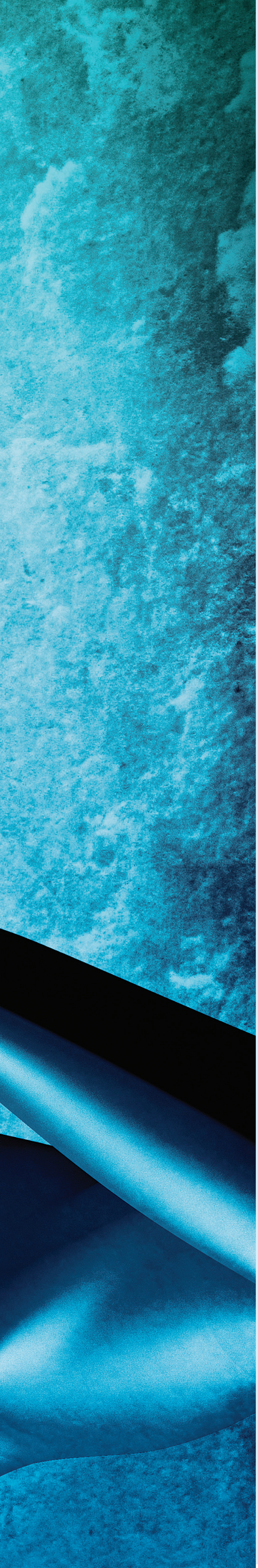
Moreover, Śrīdhara Svāmī's comment correlates with the Sanskrit in *Bhagavad-gītā* 11.48, which indicates that no one before Arjuna "amongst those who exist in the world of men [*nṛ-loke*]" had seen the universal form.

Another component of resolution comes from Prabhupāda, who, as already quoted, writes in his commentary to text 47: ". . . at that time Kṛṣṇa manifested some of His universal forms. But those forms are different from this one shown to Arjuna. It is clearly said that no one has ever seen this form before." So there are variations in universal forms, and this, too, can resolve the dilemma, i.e., no one has seen the exact universal form that Kṛṣṇa was showing to Arjuna at that time.

What was unique in Arjuna's version is that the Kurukshetra battlefield was all laid out for him, with Kṛṣṇa specifically mentioning the Kaurava generals by name and indicating that they were "already destroyed" (11.34). That is to say, the outcome of the battle was revealed to Arjuna to reassure him that he should fight. (More important, the specific vision was supposed to show Arjuna that Kṛṣṇa was the actual "doer," i.e., the killer of the specified warriors on the battlefield.) In Yaśodā's case, we find in the Tenth Canto's Eighth Chapter that in addition to the standard aspects of the universal form, she "saw Vraja in His mouth as well as herself peering into it." In other words, the universal form seems tailor-made for the person to whom Kṛṣṇa shows it.



PARASITES of the MIND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How to immunize our minds against attacks
by agents harmful to our spiritual life.

By Caitanya Caraṇa Dāsa

MANY OF US may sometimes feel fed up with the way things are going in our life. At such times, we feel mentally tired even when we are not physically tired. Because of mental exhaustion, many people seek relief in illusion through time-wasting entertainment at best and self-defeating addiction at worst. Mental tiredness can have several causes, but a common, major, and avoidable cause is the indiscriminate over-exertion of our power to desire, the result of unwittingly welcoming too many superfluous desires into our minds. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (16.21–22) indicates that these distracting desires that prevent us from acting in our best interests fall into three broad categories: lust, anger, and greed.

Lust (the desire to satisfy one's senses) and greed often fuel our desires for the many worldly objects that enter our vision and imagination, be they glitzy forms or gaudy products. These desires are innumerable and endless, and most of them are unfulfillable in real life. Consequently, a conscious or subconscious irritation builds up within us. When this irritation becomes intolerable, we succumb to anger, which perverts us into becoming sulky (mental) or snappy (verbal) or even beastly (physical). In this way, lust, greed, and anger cumulatively divert our mental focus away from the main goals of our life, both material and spiritual. The resulting inattentiveness makes us falter and blunder while pursuing those goals. As our plans misfire and backfire and nothing seems to be working in our lives, we get mentally exhausted and exasperated.

Thus, our mental exhaustion originates not so much in the external difficulties that life puts in our path as in the internal diversions that prevent us from treading that path effectively. The diversions of lust, greed, and anger are thus like mental parasites that live off our mind's energies. That's why *Gītā* wisdom urges us to immunize ourselves against these debilitating parasites and thereby keep ourselves mentally energized and focused on our worthwhile aspirations.

At this point, some readers may object, "Not so fast! Even if I can't fulfill all the desires that come into my mind, I can fulfill at least some of them. After all, fulfilling material desires is the way to happiness. Why should material desires be compared to parasites?"

Making Our Intelligence Fit

Material desires are like parasites because they almost always subvert, even sabotage, our best interests. When they divert us from our goals, they are the sources of distraction, as explained above. And when they themselves become our goals, their effect is even more deleterious: they become sources of frustration and even devastation. This is the surprising and challenging assertion of the *Bhagavad-gītā* (5.22), which states that the intelligent stay away from material pleasures—the goals of material desires—because they recognize that such pleasures lead not to happiness but to misery.

We can make our intelligence fit to realize the truth of this *Gītā* verse by using as a contemplation tool the acronym FIT (Futile, Insubstantial, Temporary), which encompasses the three kinds of possible results when we seek material pleasures:

1. Futile: We desire to enjoy, but the opportunity never turns up (e.g., we long for our favorite delicacy in an upcoming feast, but it's not included on the menu).
2. Insubstantial: We get the opportunity to enjoy, but the enjoyment turns out to be an anti-climax (e.g., the menu includes our cherished delicacy, but it is poorly cooked and falls far below our expectation).
3. Temporary: We enjoy the pleasure, but it ends too soon, due to either limited availability externally or limited capacity internally, leaving us tormented by the craving for more (e.g., the cake tastes good, but there's not enough of it, or we're too full to eat more).

Thus, the quest for material pleasures leads us to frustration, sooner or later. This fact vindicates the analogy of material desires as parasites: Just as parasites harm their host bodies, material desires harm their host minds.

Of course, the inability to enjoy a favorite delicacy may not be a serious matter, but the inability to perceive the doomed nature of material pleasures has far more serious ramifications. Some material desires acquire a lifelong vicious grip on people's minds and impel them to perpetrate vicious acts again and again. After all, aren't sexual abusers driven mostly by unbridled sexual lust? Aren't ruthless racketeers who swindle millions of people out of millions of dollars goaded largely by unmanageable greed? Aren't cold-blooded vengence seekers stimulated principally by uncontrollable anger? If we understand the doomed nature of material pleasures, then we see the tragedy behind the insanity of such people; they inflict much suffering on others in the hope of happiness, but their hope itself is based on a false premise and so is never fulfilled. If only they could make their intelligence fit, they would see that their parasitic material desires are not just wasting their mental energy, but are ruining their lives, and the lives of so many others, all for nothing—or for a meager pleasure at best.

> **Freeing the mind of parasitic material desires requires a systematic and appropriate spiritual treatment plan.**

Of course, most of us are unlikely to ever be as grievously subjugated by parasitic material desires as rapists and racketeers. Nonetheless, even when our desires don't impel us to violate legal or moral boundaries, still they take a colossal toll of our mental energies. For example, lust masquerading as love may induce within us the desire for a particular spouse, thereby compelling us to dream and scheme for days and months and years. Let's apply our fit intelligence to see how FIT may play out here:

1. Futile: The person we desire rejects us outright, thereby bursting the bubble of our fantasies in one go, with one unbearable prick.

2. Insubstantial: That person accepts our proposal and formalizes the relationship, but then we discover that the person is not what our dreams had depicted and that some essential incompatibilities exist between us that can't be resolved. We are left to watch in helpless dismay as the bubble of our dreams deflates gradually into nothingness.

3. Temporary: That person satisfies our heart to some extent, thereby inflating the bubble of our expectations, but then destiny mercilessly ruptures our relationship: An untimely death heart-wrenchingly bursts the giant bubble of our hopes.

In sad cases like these, our lust-induced misdirection, whichever dead end it meets, is enormously expensive mentally.

All material desires—be they for a house, a car, a post, or whatever else—extract a significant mental cost and a return that borders on nothing. Material desires can be of many kinds, but the Vedic wisdom-tradition categorizes them into six broad groups: lust, anger, greed, envy, pride, and illusion. Among these, the *Gītā* (16.21) highlights the first three as especially able to misdirect the soul, so I am focusing on them.

By sober, sustained analyses of the nature of material pleasures, we recognize that they are unfit to be desired; they will simply suck and sap our mental energies, as parasites suck and sap our physical energies.

This recognition needs to bring about a radical shift in our perception of the spark for these desires: worldly temptations. Just as intelligent people treat parasites with caution and suspicion, and are alert to keep them out of their bodies, we need to treat the parasites of desire with caution and suspicion, and be alert to prevent them from entering our minds by way of temptations.

Temptation: Welcome Tune or Alarm Bell?

The *Gītā* (3.41) warns us to recognize temptation as a symbol of sin (*pāpmānam*) and fight it off as soon as it makes its seductive and deceptive appearance.

But when we are intellectually inert, the arrival of temptation sets off a welcome tune in our consciousness; our lethargic intelligence has no strength or spunk to unmask the treacherous façade of temptation. Consequently, the doomed hope that giving in to the temptation will make us happy carries us helplessly, even eagerly, away. In other words, we welcome the parasitic desires injected by the temptations, mistaking them to be benevolent. In contrast, when we are intellectually alert the arrival of the same temptation triggers an alarm bell in our consciousness. Our robust intelligence swings into action to drive it out, knowing well that it is a forerunner of emotional distraction that can snowball into spiritual destruction. Consequently, we gird ourselves for an inner battle that leads to a gradual but inevitable triumph if we seek shelter and strength in remembering Kṛṣṇa.

Just as freeing the body from parasites requires a systematic and appropriate treatment plan, fighting to free the mind of parasitic material desires requires a systematic and appropriate spiritual treatment plan. In fact, the *Bhagavad-gītā* (6.36) states that without such a plan, self-mastery is nearly impossible whereas with such a plan, it is entirely possible. Let's now look at what such a plan involves.

CALENDAR

This calendar is calculated for Mayapur, West Bengal, India. The dates, derived from a lunar calendar, may vary by one day for other locations. For the exact dates for your area, go to ***www.krishnadays.com****.*

Because the Hare Kṛṣṇa movement comes in disciplic line from Caitanya Mahāprabhu, the calendar includes not only dates relevant to all followers of the Vedic tradition but also dates relating to Lord Caitanya's associates and prominent spiritual masters in His disciplic succession.

December 29–January 27

(*Month of Nārāyaṇa*)

JANUARY

1—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda.

8—Saphalā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

12—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Locana Dāsa Ṭhākura, a great devotee of Kṛṣṇa known for his Bengali devotional songs.

14—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

22—Putradā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

January 28–February 25

(*Month of Mādhava*)

FEBRUARY

1—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Gopāla Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana.

2—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Jayadeva Gosvāmī, a great spiritual master and author of *Gīta-govinda*.

6—Ṣaṭ-tilā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

15—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Raghunātha Dāsa Gosvāmī, one of the six Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura, a Vaiṣṇava spiritual master and author who appeared in the seventeenth century. Appearance anniversary of Śrīmatī Viṣṇupriyā Devī, the consort of Lord Caitanya.

17—Appearance anniversary of Advaita Ācārya, an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's expansion Mahā-Viṣṇu and a close associate of Lord Caitanya. Fasting till noon.

19—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīpāda Madhvācārya, a Vaiṣṇava philosopher and spiritual master who appeared in the thirteenth century.

20—Disappearance anniversary of Śrīla Rāmānujācārya, an eleventh-century philosopher and spiritual master.

21—Bhaimī Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans. Fasting till noon. Feast tomorrow.

22—Appearance of Lord Varāha, Lord Kṛṣṇa's boar incarnation.
23—Appearance anniversary of Lord Nityānanda Prabhu, a close associate of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu and an incarnation of Lord Kṛṣṇa's elder brother, Lord Balarāma. Fasting till noon.

25—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura, a spiritual master in the disciplic line from Lord Caitanya who composed many devotional songs in Bengali.

February 26–March 27

(*Month of Govinda*)

MARCH

2—Appearance anniversary of Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura, the spiritual master of Śrīla A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda, the founder-*ācārya* of the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. Fasting till noon, then feasting.

18—Vijayā Ekādaśī
Fasting from grains and beans.

Say No by Saying Yes

Even after recognizing the need to curb material desires, many of us often remain mentally preoccupied with the temptations we plan to evade and avoid. This negative or defensive attitude in dealing with the parasitic desires needlessly increases the difficulty of the fight.

To stay away from temptations, many of us use two faculties:

1. Moral conscience, which tells us it is the right thing to do.
2. Philosophical conviction, which tells us it is the beneficial thing to do.

Moral and philosophical discernment is necessary; without it, self-restraint often becomes an exercise in meaningless and purposeless self-torture. Discernment is necessary, but not sufficient, however. With discernment, we recognize self-restraint to be right and beneficial, but don't experience it to be joyful. That's why the *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.60) states that temptations overpower even a person of discernment endeavoring for self-restraint.

The next verse (2.61) urges us to complement discernment with engagement. When we engage ourselves

(*please turn to page 51*)

BOOK EXCERPT

Academics & Devo

Guidance from a mother who homeschooled her two sons, and who both are now devotees and scholars.

By Aruddhā Devī Dāsī

AS OUR CHILDREN reached school age, my husband and I began seriously considering our options for their formal education. Like many devotee parents, our aspirations were straightforward: we wanted to instill deep Kṛṣṇa conscious values in our children while giving them a solid academic education. We investigated area public schools and tried a private school for a while, but we were disappointed in one way or another. We then considered sending our children to a *gurukula* boarding school in another city, but there were few of these schools to choose from, and the ones that existed were too far away.

Besides, we needed each other as a family. Boise, Idaho, is a small town, and when we moved to Boise in 1986, there was no temple or devotee community here. So my husband and I started a small center in our home, hosting regular programs on Sundays. It was then that we came upon the concept of homeschooling, which was becoming increasingly popular in the United States. We purchased a readymade homeschooling curriculum, but soon gave it up and put together our own lesson plans, using Śrīla Prabhupāda's books as the main textbooks. After sev-

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Adapted from *Homeschooling Krishna's Children,* available from the Krishna.com Store.

In the temple of their Boise, Idaho, home, Ravi and Gopal learn a variety of devotional practices.

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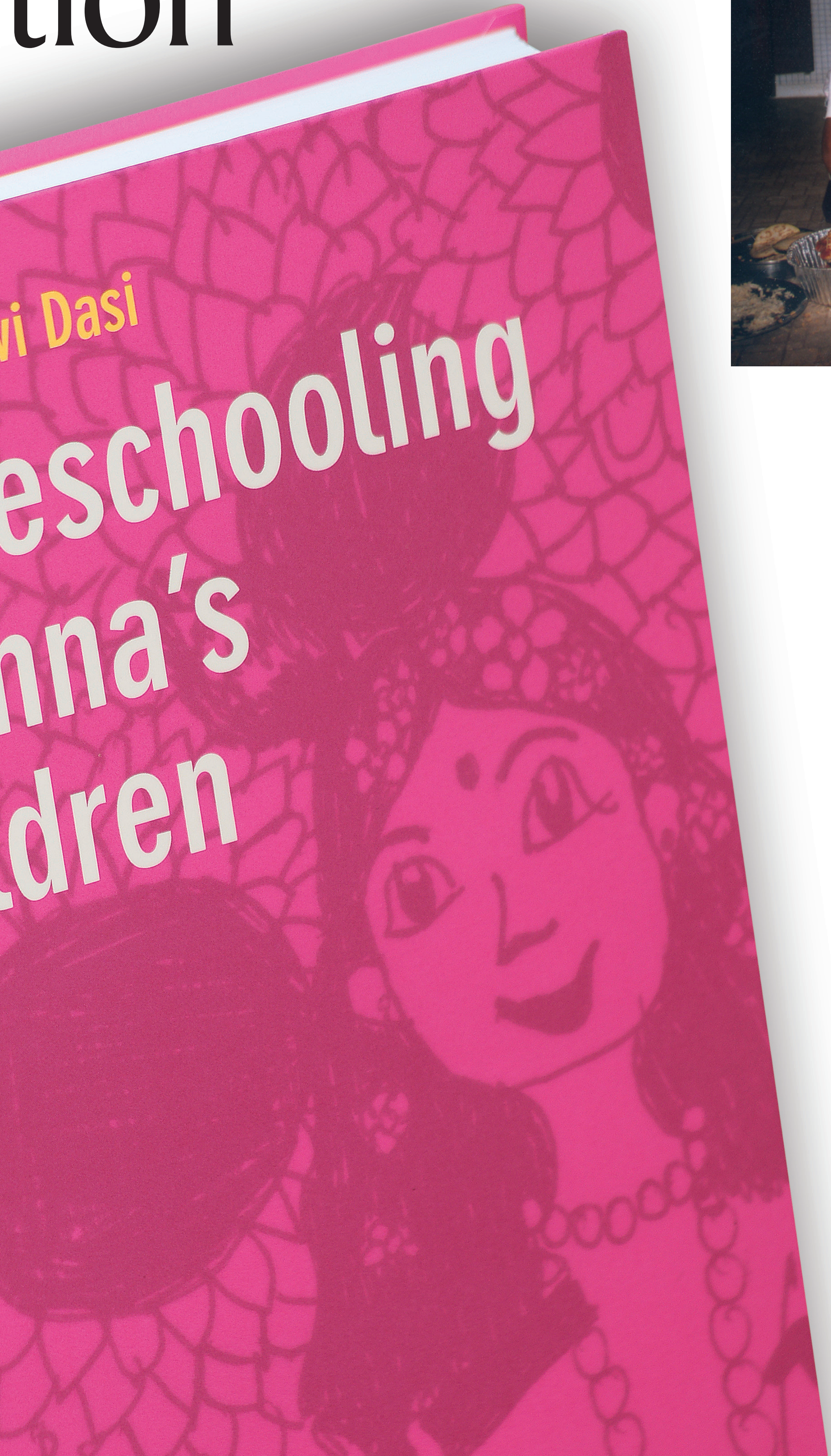


From a young age the boys begin learning how to cook for Kṛṣṇa.

eral years of homeschooling in this way we had no doubt: the process was working and our children were doing well both academically and spiritually. The small center grew into a beautiful midsize temple for their Lordships Śrī Śrī Radhā-Baṅkebihārī—our protectors and proprietors. The temple became the focus of many of our homeschooling activities.

Soon after our two sons graduated from university, I began receiving calls from young devotee parents who had heard of homeschooling and wanted guidance in teaching their own children. They were determined to give their children a Kṛṣṇa conscious education grounded in strong spiritual, moral, and academic values, but they were unsure how to go about it. I helped them the best I could. Soon these queries led to homeschooling seminars, where I could offer a more systematic presentation and personally interact with more parents. As interest grew among devotee communities, I was invited for seminars in cities throughout the United States, India, and England. As more parents adopted homeschooling to educate their children, I found satisfaction in their success.

The Gupta family (from left): Ananta-rūpa Dāsa, Aruddhā Devī Dāsī, Gopāla Hari Dāsa, and Rādhikā Ramaṇa Dāsa.

Wherever I went parents asked me to write a book to systematically explain the method of homeschooling I had developed using Śrīla Prabhupāda's books. Five years ago I began writing down my own homeschooling experiences, researching Śrīla Prabhupāda's instructions on education, and listening to parents' questions, ideas, and experiences. This book is the result of that process.

Basic Principles of Kṛṣṇa Conscious Homeschooling

Homeschooling can be part of a Kṛṣṇa conscious lifestyle, but it is a mistake to think Kṛṣṇa consciousness is simply an aspect of homeschooling. A Kṛṣṇa conscious lifestyle should be the focus of homeschooling. That is, we should be inspired to raise our children as good devotees rather than focusing only on their scholastic achievements, with Kṛṣṇa consciousness taking second place. Śrīla Prabhupāda's books are of a high spiritual caliber, so if we base our curriculum on his books, academic achievement will follow naturally.

What does it mean for children to live a Kṛṣṇa conscious life? Prabhupāda explains this in simple terms: "Simply follow the program of the elders. Let the children associate as much as possible with the routine Kṛṣṇa conscious program, and when the others go out for working and business matters, the children can be given classes." (Letter to Aniruddha Dāsa, March 7, 1972)

This is what we tried to do in our own homeschooling. The children lived at home just as they would in a *gurukula*—with a few adjustments. We held our own morning program, and after breakfast *prasāda* we studied the *Bhāgavatam* for two or three hours every day. This study became a major part of our homeschooling curriculum, and through the *Bhāgavatam* we covered a number of subjects. Then after our study we applied what we were learning in our practical daily activities. For example, we would go out preaching, giving classes on Kṛṣṇa consciousness at local schools. We also wrote and rehearsed devotional plays, organized devotional festivals, performed deity worship, distributed books at local events, and went out on *harināma.* There was never a dull moment for us; homeschooling was so filled with Kṛṣṇa conscious activities that there was no time for anything else.

Śrīla Prabhupāda's idea for the education of our children was to make them well-rounded devotees who are expert in *śāstra,* eager to give Kṛṣṇa to others, and steady in their personal practice. He once said, "We are interested to open [a] school if there is education for Kṛṣṇa consciousness. But we are not interested in so-called godless education. That is not our business." (Lecture, November 13, 1973, Delhi)

Since Kṛṣṇa is the source of all knowledge, if we understand and love Him, then all sorts of knowledge will follow. Everything material and spiritual comes from Kṛṣṇa. This is why Śrīla Prabhupāda emphasized spirituality as the goal of education; he knew that *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* has everything in it needed to understand both the material and the spiritual worlds. Śrīla Prabhupāda envisioned our children receiving not only an academic education but developing godly character as well. To have good character one must have God in the center of his or her life; otherwise, there is no impetus to check one's actions. Kṛṣṇa has many wonderful qualities, such as kindness, wisdom, peacefulness, and forgiveness, and a godly person can develop these same qualities. Good character comes from living a pure and simple life dedicated to hearing and chanting the holy names, the basis of all learning. Since the main purpose of homeschooling is to raise a Kṛṣṇa conscious child, a Kṛṣṇa conscious lifestyle must be the basis for home education.

An important element in preparing the home for the homeschooled child is the introduction of deity worship. Deity worship is essential in the education and training of our children because it trains them to be clean and punctual and to focus the mind on Kṛṣṇa. Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura emphasizes the importance of deity worship in Chapter 11 of *Jaiva-dharma:* "The religions that have no provision for deity worship face the danger that those children born into the religion and those just beginning spiritual life—both of whom may have little or no understanding of or deep faith in the Godhead—may become overtly materialistic and even develop aversion toward the Supreme Lord as a result of the absence of a deity form on which to fix their minds. Therefore deity worship is the foundation of religion for general humanity."

Prabhupāda also recommended deity worship for all householders. Householders who worship deities at home can bring up their children in a pristine atmosphere, in which they demonstrate practically how to love Kṛṣṇa. Parents can teach their children the importance of bowing down, chanting, dancing, and performing services such as cleaning the temple, making flower garlands, decorating the deities, and observing festivals. Right from the beginning, children can be taught to offer everything to the deities before using it themselves, including food, new clothing, and their talents. In this way a child can develop natural attraction for the Lord.

Since Kṛṣṇa is the source of all knowledge, if we understand and love Him, then all sorts of knowledge will follow.

Children have a natural tendency to play, and instead of using this urge frivolously they can play with Kṛṣṇa, decorate Him, feed Him, and worship Him. When they are young they can worship and play with Kṛṣṇa dolls, and as they mature they can assist their parents in deity worship. In a letter to his disciple Stokakṛṣṇa Dāsa (June 13, 1972) Prabhupāda wrote: "The children should always be instructed by taking advantage of their playful mood and teaching them to play Kṛṣṇa games like pretending to be cowherd boys, cows, peacocks, or demons, and in this way if they always think of Kṛṣṇa by playing just like they are actually present in association with Kṛṣṇa, then they will become Kṛṣṇa conscious very quickly. In addition, there should be a little ABC, then *prasāda,* then worshiping the deity, then more playing Kṛṣṇa games, some *kīrtana,* a little more ABC, like that. In this way, always keep their minds and bodies engaged in different activities because children are restless by nature so they will want to change often."

Prabhupāda gives his own childhood as an example. "So children, they generally imitate the parents' habits or activities. So fortunately we had the opportunity of getting such a father. So we are imitating our father. In my childhood I imitated my father. He was worshiping the deity of Kṛṣṇa. So I asked him, 'My dear father, I shall worship. Give me the deity of Kṛṣṇa.' So he gave me a little deity of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā and I was imitating. So beginning of life . . . So these are actually facts. Mahārāja Parīkṣit also, he was playing with Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa dolls. Just like Mīrā Bāi. She was playing with a Kṛṣṇa doll and later on she became a very high-grade devotee. So these chances are there." (Lecture, September 16, 1966, New York)

Prabhupāda writes of Uddhava's early deity worship in his purport to *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* 3.2.2: "From his very birth, Uddhava was a natural devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa, or a *nitya-siddha,* a liberated soul. From natural instinct he used to serve Lord Kṛṣṇa, even in his childhood. He used to play with dolls in the form of Kṛṣṇa, he would serve the dolls by dressing, feeding, and worshiping Them, and thus he was constantly absorbed in the play of transcendental realization. These are the signs of an eternally liberated soul."

We introduced deity worship for our boys when they were three and five years old. They had their own four-inch Gaura-Nitāi deities, to whom they became attached. I was with them when they did their worship. We would take several hours to dress, bathe, and decorate Them with ornaments. Then we would make an offering followed by *ārati* and *kīrtana.* Sometimes they would spill water or drop paraphernalia, but that is to be expected of small children. Overall, they took care of Gaura-Nitāi with love and respect. What was amazing was how they were absorbed for two to three hours without being distracted. They loved the worship. Anything they ate or drank they wanted to offer to their deities, and they would remind us to do the same. It created a transcendental mood in the home, and it was easy for them to understand that everything should be done for Kṛṣṇa's pleasure. If they were disobedient it did not take them long to give it up because of their desire to please Gaura-Nitāi.

When children engage in deity worship, they understand that Kṛṣṇa is a person, a friend, and their worshipful object. He is approachable and can reciprocate with His worshipers. Deity worship is a natural way to evoke love of Godhead in children. No amount of explaining can do the same.

Another side benefit of deity worship is that children learn the importance of cleanliness. They learn that they must bathe before they touch the deities, and that even though Kṛṣṇa is their friend, He is not to be treated casually or like an ordinary person. It becomes easy to make Kṛṣṇa the most important family member, who needs to be kept satisfied and happy.

The Scriptures As the Basis of Homeschooling

Śrīla Prabhupāda said that from the very beginning children "should be taught Sanskrit and English so in the future they can read our books. That will make them M.A., Ph.D." (Letter to Jagadīśa Dāsa, April 6, 1977) The knowledge in Prabhupāda's books is advanced. Children can be well-educated, happy, satisfied, and even go back to Godhead by reading them.

As evident in many of his lectures, it is clear that Śrīla Prabhupāda desired the children in his *gurukulas* to read *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam.* On July 12, 1974, speaking on *Bhāgavatam* (1.16.22), Prabhupāda confirmed that the *Bhāgavatam* would equip any child to know every subject. They would need nothing else. Please read the following quotation carefully:

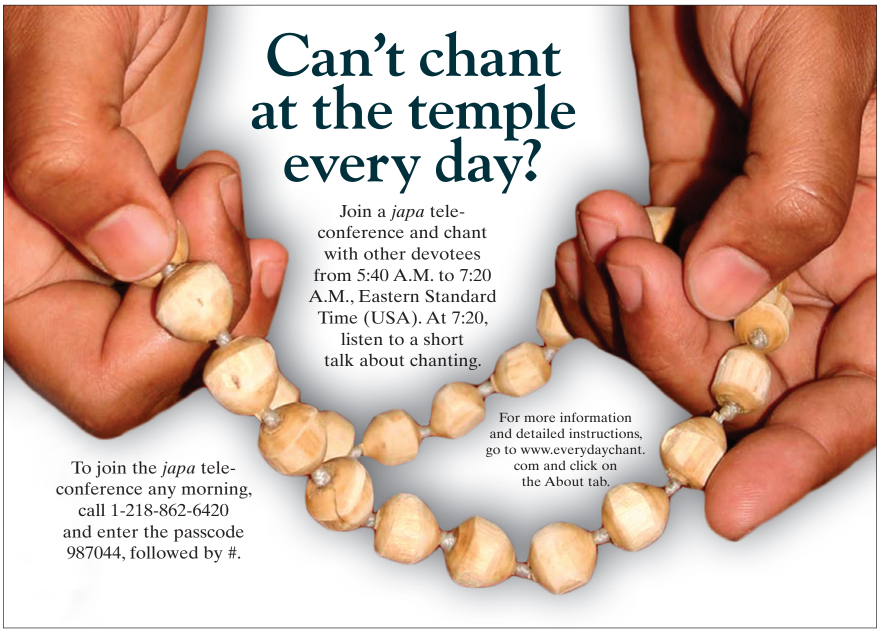
> So in *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* you will find everything. Whatever is necessary for the advancement of human civilization, everything is there described. And knowledge also, all departments of knowledge, even astronomy, astrology, politics, sociology, atomic theory, everything is there. *Vidyā-bhāgavatāvadhi.* Therefore if you study *Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam* very carefully, then you get all knowledge completely. Because *Bhāgavatam* begins from the point of creation: *janmādy asya yataḥ.*

By giving them this foundation, children become confident of their spiritual identity and also do well academically. Prabhupāda's books inspire us to use logic and critical thinking, which are the main elements of academic education. Even a basic understanding of *Bhāgavatam* philosophy far exceeds the level of thinking found in most college courses.

Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam covers all subjects. By teaching children through the *Bhāgavatam,* they have a head start on all other subjects. Later, when they have to study these other subjects through nondevotional books they will have the proper Vedic perspective and not be misled into atheistic or materialistic thinking.

It is easier to study the *Bhāgavatam* than the *Bhagavad-gītā* with children because the *Bhāgavatam* contains stories. It also contains all the philosophy of the *Bhagavad-gītā,* so there is no loss in focusing on the *Bhāgavatam.* We have seen that even a six-year-old can learn to read directly from Prabhupāda's books, and because of the books' potency the child's language skills quickly increase. Once children have a good command of language, they can master any subject.

Prabhupāda wanted all subjects to be taught in a Kṛṣṇa conscious manner: "As soon as possible we should open our own school and teach children Kṛṣṇa consciousness through English medium; that is one of our programs. Our school will not be government recognized because we cannot follow the government syllabus. We want to teach only Kṛṣṇa consciousness. . . . Try to introduce immediately Kṛṣṇa conscious instruction to the students through English medium . . . Our girl disciples may be engaged for teaching them a little English grammar, reading and writing, geography, arithmetic, history, Sanskrit, but all of them should be Kṛṣṇa conscious—that is the *bhāgavata* program." (Letter to Girirāja Dāsa, April 12, 1972)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PARASITES OF THE MIND

(*continued form page 45*)

in service to Kṛṣṇa—especially when we engage our minds in the service of remembering Him—then spiritual happiness doesn't remain an abstract conception or a utopian aspiration; it becomes a concrete reality and a living experience. The *Bhagavad-gītā* (2.62–63) describes how giving our attention to an object stimulates our desires and actions for attaining that object. This universal psychological principle of "whatever catches our attention catches us" normally binds us when we contemplate, for example, the material objects depicted in billboards and commercials. But this same principle can also free us if we intelligently redirect our attention towards Kṛṣṇa, who makes Himself available and attractive to us by appearing in various ways: His enchanting deities, His soothing holy names, His electrifying *kīrtanas,* His alluring pastimes, His loving devotees, His fulfilling service. These are, in a sense, Kṛṣṇa's commercials and billboards. If we strive to consciously give our attention to the aspect of Kṛṣṇa that attracts our heart, we will soon pleasantly discover that He has caught our attention and thereby caught us. And Kṛṣṇa's catching us is supremely auspicious. When He fills our heart with memory of Him and love for Him, material desires get crowded out, and we become freed forever from their torturous infection.

Moreover, service to Kṛṣṇa is not restricted to activities directly connected to Him. Even our worldly responsibilities can become a service to Kṛṣṇa if we keep Him in our hearts and strive to fulfill those responsibilities as devotional offerings to Him. Thus, giving up material desires doesn't necessitate giving up all material activities or responsibilities. What is parasitic and needs to be given up is the false hope that material things can make us happy, because only our loving relationship with Kṛṣṇa can make us truly happy.

Once the central driving purpose of our life becomes reviving our relationship with Kṛṣṇa, then we can harmonize our worldly activities with that purpose. When we start using our devotional creativity to discover in every situation, every event, every activity, every interaction the hidden opportunity to serve Kṛṣṇa, and then say yes to that opportunity, the resulting devotional connection with Kṛṣṇa through internal remembrance and external service gives us profound spiritual fulfillment. Once we start tasting and valuing this fulfillment, then temptations become exposed for what they are: sources of distraction, not gratification. At that stage, saying no to them becomes not just right and beneficial, but also joyful.

Saying a resounding yes to Kṛṣṇa is the most effective way of saying a decisive no to parasitic material desires.

Moreover, the extraordinary transformational potency of Kṛṣṇa consciousness can make a parasitic relationship symbiotic. The great Vaiṣṇava saint Narottama Dāsa Ṭhākura indicates in his book *Prema-bhakti-candrikā* that once we redirect our heart to Kṛṣṇa, then we can reshape even lust, greed, and anger into aids to our spiritual progress. We can channel the passion of lust towards desiring the best things of the world for Kṛṣṇa's service and pleasure. We can use the ardor of greed to tirelessly receive and relish Kṛṣṇa's unlimited glories. We can maneuver the power of anger to stop misconceptions and miscreants from obstructing Kṛṣṇa's message of love from reaching all of His children.

Thus, saying a resounding yes to Kṛṣṇa is the most effective way of saying a decisive no to parasitic material desires.

Four Similarities

I discussed how material desires are like parasites in four ways:

1. Just as a mild parasitic infection drains us physically, a mild infection by material desires drains us mentally.
2. Just as a severe parasitic infection causes us acute bodily suffering, a severe infection by material desires causes us the acute mental suffering of frustration.
3. Just as we see parasites as potential threats for the body, we need to see material desires as parasites for our minds.
4. Just as we would take an authentic and systematic medical treatment to disinfect ourselves of parasites, we need to take the authentic and systematic spiritual treatment of Kṛṣṇa consciousness to disinfect ourselves of material desires.

When we realize material desires to be parasitic and strive to free ourselves from them, then we will stop them from dissipating our mental energy. We will surprise ourselves with our remarkably high mental energy and will be able to achieve much more both materially and spiritually. Materially, we will be able to fulfill our worldly responsibilities with greater diligence and competence. More important, spiritually, we will be able to cultivate and experience spiritual happiness in this very life. And at the end of our life we will be able to return to Kṛṣṇa for a life of eternal love and happiness. ❁

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MAHĀPR
VICTORY
Over the Mayāvādīs at

By Karuṇā Dhārinī Devī Dāsī

IN 1486 CE, Lord Kṛṣṇa appeared in West Bengal as Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. Though Kṛṣṇa Himself, Lord Caitanya comes in the mood of a fully Kṛṣṇa conscious devotee and teaches us pure *bhakti,* the personal, loving, service relationship of the soul with the Supreme Lord. To awaken that relationship, Lord Caitanya recommended the singing of the holy names of God, especially the *mahā-mantra:* Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu and the many persons who joined Him sang and danced throughout West Bengal. The sweet mood of appreciation and revelry among a broad network of persons in the *bhakti* movement became so widely established during that time in India's history that Mahāprabhu's biographers compare what they experienced to a flood of love of God. True lovers of God were described as drowned in the love, while others floated.

Not surprisingly, other types of spiritualists stood aside to avoid the inundation. One particular group, the Māyāvādīs, remained quite dry, making them a special target of Lord Caitanya's mercy.

Māyāvāda Philosophy Opposed to Bhakti

Pure love of God is rarely seen in the material world. Today, impersonal concepts usually influence spirituality. People are taught to contemplate spiritual energy with no form or personal identity. That is Māyāvāda philosophy. Caitanya Mahāprabhu taught that true love of God is found only in the personal relationship between the living entity and God, an eternally existing person. Caitanya Mahāprabhu considered the Māyāvāda philosophy a great obstacle to awakening that relationship.

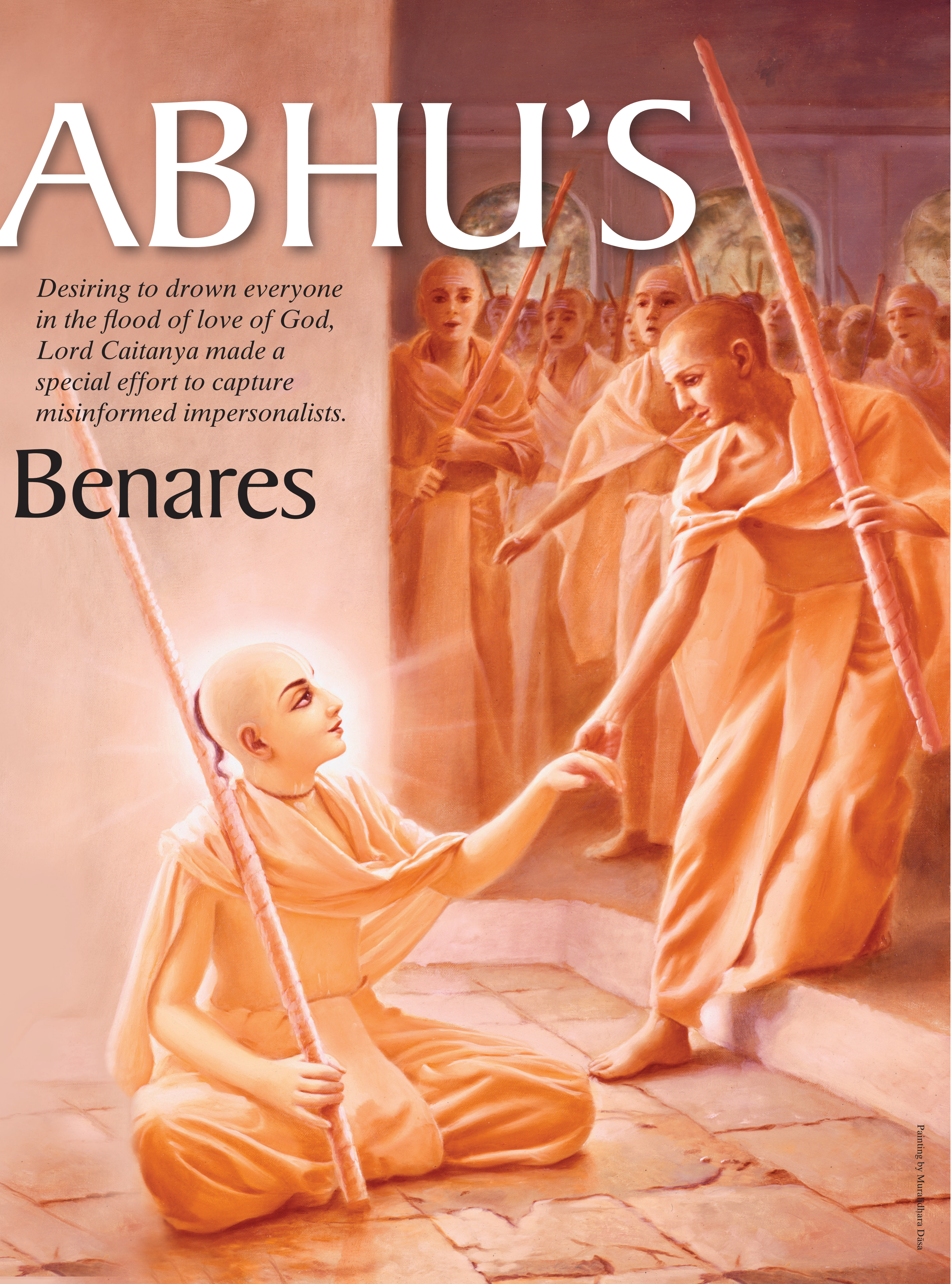
The title of Śrīla Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja Gosvāmī's epic biography on Mahāprabhu—*Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta*—translates as "the character of the eternal living force." That spiritual force is not without identity, personal qualities, and characteristics. For example, sometimes Lord Caitanya is referred to as Gaurasundara (*gaura,* golden; *sundara,* beautiful) because His pure spiritual complexion is golden and very appealing. He was a learned teacher, and He had a loyal devotee wife and a very affectionate devotee mother. He was a scholar who was so popular that He gathered hundreds of followers everywhere He went to establish *saṅkīrtana,* or public chanting of Kṛṣṇa's names. So He was never without personal characteristics. Nor were His followers. The *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* describes a kind of spiritual family tree with fascinating branches and sub-branches of inspiring, sometimes amusing, descriptions of the character and behavior of hundreds of pure devotees of Kṛṣṇa who were special followers of Caitanya Mahāprabhu.

Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī invites Caitanya Mahāprabhu to join the company of the other sannyāsīs *in the* brāhmaṇa's *home.*

ABHU'S

Desiring to drown everyone in the flood of love of God, Lord Caitanya made a special effort to capture misinformed impersonalists.

Benares



Painting by Muralidhara Dāsa

The Māyāvādī philosophers, strict followers of Śaṅkarācārya, prefer their spirituality sans descriptions and characteristics. As shown by his commentary on *Vedānta-sūtra,* Śaṅkarācārya interpreted the *Vedas* as saying that spirit is without form or personality. Caitanya Mahāprabhu argued that Śaṅkarācārya misrepresented the clear meaning of *Vedānta-sūtra,* written by Śrīla Vyāsadeva. The Māyāvādīs are therefore misled. Śrīla Prabhupāda explained that the word *māyāvādī* is composed of two elements: *māyā,* matter, and *vādī,* one who sticks to this principle. Māyāvādīs simply want to negate because they have no positive information.

Lord Caitanya argued that Śaṅkarācārya misrepresented the clear meaning of *Vedānta-sūtra,* written by Vyāsadeva.

Many contemporary or New Age spiritual sects similarly focus on "that which is not" (a literal translation of *māyā*) as the basis of their belief system. They even chant the name of Kṛṣṇa as a novel feature to help them establish a following. Śrīla Prabhupāda described Māyāvāda philosophy as a covered form of atheism.

Mahāprabhu in Benares

For four nights, Lord Caitanya stayed in Benares at the house of a devotee named Tapana Miśra, to whom He had awarded spiritual initiation in Bengal. Tapana Miśra was delighted to have the Lord in his home, and during His stay many people became attracted to chanting with Him.

But Benares was filled with Māyāvādīs, and when they got word that Mahāprabhu was staying in their town, they badmouthed Him. The Māyāvādīs had little appreciation for the singing of the holy names of Kṛṣṇa. Since Caitanya Mahāprabhu was a *sannyāsī* like them, they considered His actions improper: "Although a *sannyāsī,* He does not take interest in the study of Vedānta but instead always engages in chanting and dancing in *saṅkīrtana*. This Caitanya Mahāprabhu is an illiterate *sannyāsī* and therefore does not know His real function. Guided only by His sentiments, He wanders about in the company of other sentimentalists." (*Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Ādi-līlā* 7.41–42)

On hearing of these complaints, the Lord did not speak with the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* or defend Himself.

On another occasion in Benares the Lord stayed at the house of Candraśekhara Ācārya, a devotee physician, but took His meals at the home of Tapana Miśra, a clerk, thus flouting the rule that a *sannyāsī* should eat only at the house of a *brāhmaṇa*. Simultaneously, when the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* repeatedly invited Mahāprabhu to dine with them, He declined.

At Candraśekhara's house the Lord instructed Sanātana Gosvāmī, a highly qualified disciple, for two months on the details of Vaiṣṇava philosophy and behavior. Sanātana became a great *bhakti* scholar and a leader in Caitanya Mahāprabhu's movement.

Tapana Miśra's young son, later known as Raghunātha Bhaṭṭa Gosvāmī, was another significant devotee of the Caitanya family tree. He served the Lord at their home by washing His dishes and massaging His legs. The boy became filled with love of Kṛṣṇa and later in Vrindavan became a personal assistant to Rūpa Gosvāmī, Sanātana's brother. All these devotees were highly elevated in Kṛṣṇa *bhakti*.

While the Lord's second blissful visit to Benares was very productive for the future of the Vaiṣṇava tradition, there was an increase in unseemly rumors coming from the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs.* Tapana Miśra and Candraśekhara were unhappy about this.

"How long can we tolerate the blasphemy of Your critics against Your conduct?" they asked Caitanya Mahāprabhu. "We should give up our lives rather than hear such blasphemy. We cannot tolerate such criticism, for this blasphemy breaks our hearts." (Cc. *Ādi* 7.50–51)

Though Candraśekhara Ācārya and Tapana Miśra were fully devoted to the Lord as their spiritual teacher, they were not competent enough to refute the arguments of the Māyāvādīs. They felt helpless to stop the intolerable pain they were feeling.

A Fortunate Coincidence

At that time a *brāhmaṇa* arrived to meet Lord Caitanya. The *brāhmaṇa* knew very well that Caitanya Mahāprabhu was the only Vaiṣṇava *sannyāsī* in Benares. He understood something about both parties. He fell at Mahāprabhu's feet and begged Him to please come to have a meal in his home, where many Māyāvāda *sannyāsīs* would be in attendance.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu smiled. Through this invitation He could address the concerns of His devotees and make Himself available to interact with the Māyāvādīs. He accepted the *brāhmaṇa's* request.

Śrīla Prabhupāda explains that a Vaiṣṇava *ācārya* is very strict in his principles and will not meet with persons averse to understanding Kṛṣṇa. An *ācārya* can be as hard as a thunderbolt in his attitude toward such persons, yet sometimes he is as soft as a rose. In this instance Mahāprabhu exhibited His gentle nature by accepting an invitation to meet with persons who had no appreciation for Him.

The next day Mahāprabhu walked barefoot to the *brāhmaṇa's* house. Traditionally, as a part of their renunciation, *sannyāsīs* would walk barefoot, and when they entered a home or a temple they would wash their feet. Caitanya Mahāprabhu washed His feet upon entering the *brāhmaṇa's* home and then He sat down at the foot-washing place, which was considered unclean.

As described in the *Caitanya-caritāmṛta* (*Ādi-līlā* 7.60–61), "After sitting on the ground, Caitanya Mahāprabhu exhibited His mystic power by manifesting an effulgence as brilliant as the illumination of millions of suns. When the *sannyāsīs* saw the brilliant illumination of the body of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu, their minds were attracted, and they immediately gave up their sitting places and stood in respect."

The sight of the purity and brilliance of Lord Caitanya changed the leader of the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs,* Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī. When he saw Lord Caitanya sitting near the foot-washing area, he felt sorry. He supposed the Lord was aggrieved over something.

"Why are you lamenting?" he asked.

"I belong to a lower order of *sannyāsīs,*" Caitanya Mahāprabhu humbly replied. "Therefore I do not deserve to sit with you."

Moved by the Lord's meek posture and humble reply, Prakāśānanda Sarasvatī caught the young *sannyāsī* by the hand and pulled Him up to seat Him with great respect in the midst of the assembly.

The Lord's Explanation

The Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* asked, "You belong to our Śaṅkara-sampradāya and live in our village, Benares. Why then do You not associate with us? . . . You look as brilliant as if You were Nārāyaṇa Himself. Will You kindly explain why You have adopted the behavior of lower-class people?" (Cc. *Ādi* 7.67, 70)

Māyāvādīs address each other as "Nārāyaṇa" because they think they are all going to become Nārāyaṇa or merge into the energy of Nārāyaṇa when they reach perfection. Seeing Caitanya Mahāprabhu's gorgeous effulgence, they were astonished. Perhaps He had achieved their desired goal. They could not appreciate that the Supreme Personality of Godhead Nārāyaṇa was in front of them.

Lord Caitanya replied, "My spiritual master considered Me a fool. He told Me I am not qualified to study. He said to just chant Hare Kṛṣṇa, which is the essence of the *Vedas*. He told me that simply by chanting the holy name of Kṛṣṇa one can obtain freedom from material existence. Indeed, simply by chanting the Hare Kṛṣṇa mantra one will be able to see the lotus feet of the Lord." (Cc. *Ādi* 7.71–73, paraphrased)

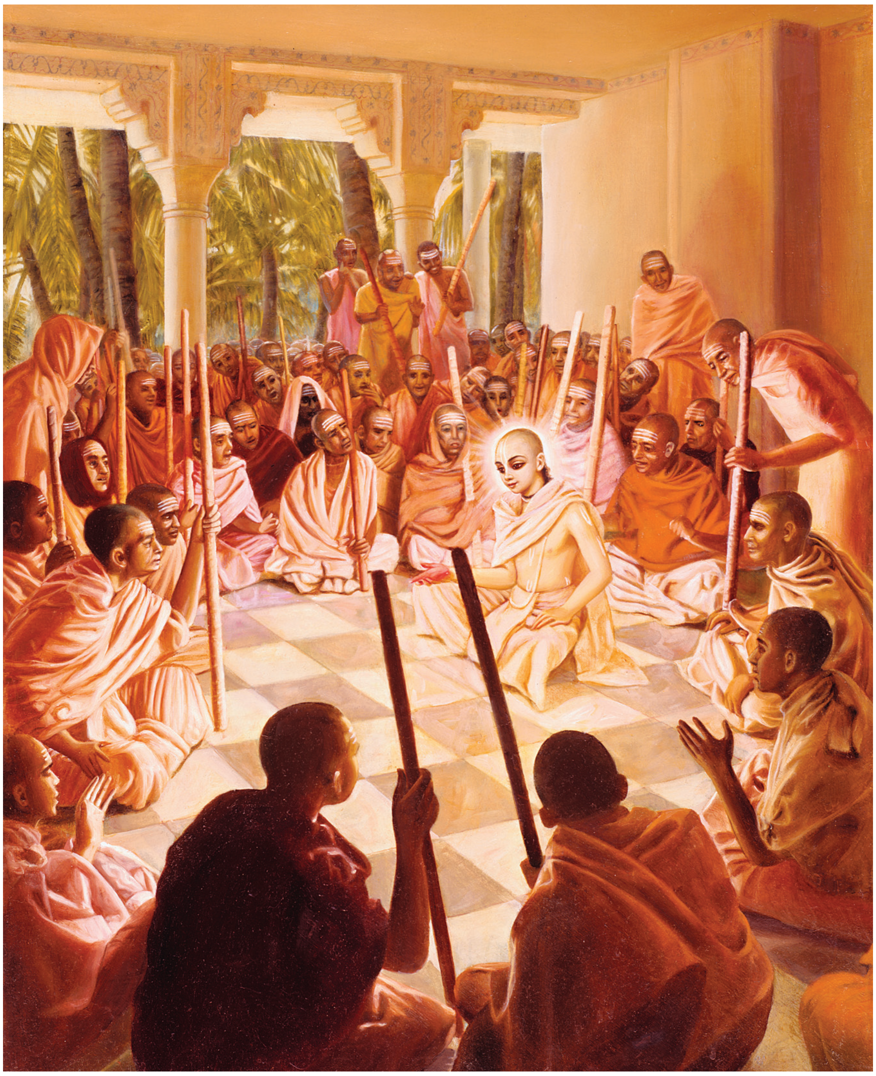
The Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahā-mantra* is known as the great mantra for deliverance. Anyone who chants sincerely can get positive results. By chanting we become free from the miserable material misconceptions about ourselves and others that keep us bound to our karma in this world.

The Lord then recited a verse often quoted by devotees of Kṛṣṇa:

harer nāma harer nāma
harer nāmaiva kevalam
kalau nāsty eva nāsty eva
nāsty eva gatir anyathā

"In this age of Kali there is no alternative, there is no alternative, there is no alternative for spiritual progress than to chant the holy name, the holy name, the holy name of the Lord." (*Bṛhan-nāradīya Purāṇa* 3.8.126)

Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained that when He began chanting on the order of His spiritual master a peculiar thing happened to Him. Simply by His attentive chanting He felt a pure happiness that triggered



Painting by Yadurāṇī Devī Dāsī

Lord Caitanya attracts the sannyāsīs *with His effulgence and persuades them with His words.*

a loss of His ordinary sense of self. He experienced feelings He had never felt before. He laughed, cried, and danced, and others thought something was seriously wrong with Him. When He finally collected His patience, He considered that perhaps the holy name was at fault for distracting Him from spiritual knowledge.

When He inquired from His spiritual master as to the nature of all of this, His spiritual master only smiled. He was greatly pleased with Him. He told Him that it is the nature of the Hare Kṛṣṇa *mahāmantra* that anyone who chants it develops loving ecstasy for Kṛṣṇa.

Lord Caitanya was able to turn the staunchly critical Māyāvādī philosophers toward the path of love of Kṛṣṇa.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu told the Māyāvāda *sannyāsīs* that His spiritual master had said to Him, "It is very good, my child, that You have attained the supreme goal of life by developing love of Godhead. Thus You have pleased Me very much, and I am very much obliged to You. My dear child, continue dancing, chanting, and performing *saṅkīrtana* in association with devotees. Furthermore, go out and preach the value of chanting *kṛṣṇa-nāma* [Kṛṣṇa's name], for by this process you will be able to deliver all fallen souls." (Cc. *Ādi* 7.91–92)

The Actual Vedānta

The Lord's explanation moved the Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs*. They acknowledged that to achieve such wonderful love for God one must be very fortunate.

Still they asked, "There is no objection to Your being a great devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa; everyone is satisfied with this. But why do you avoid discussing the *Vedānta-sūtra*? What is the fault in it?"

The Lord smiled slightly.

"My dear sirs, if you don't mind I will say something to you regarding Vedānta philosophy."

Caitanya Mahāprabhu explained that Śrīpāda Śaṅkarācārya, the scriptural authority of the Māyāvādīs, gave indirect meanings to the statements of the Vedic literature. According to the direct meaning, the Absolute Truth is the Personality of Godhead, Śrī Kṛṣṇa.

Caitanya Mahāprabhu told them that Śaṅkarācārya is respected as an incarnation of Lord Śiva and his commentary on the *Vedas,* called *Śārīraka-bhāṣya,* is very influential. But it was written as a compromise between theism and atheism. It does not represent the actual conclusion of Vedānta. It was originally written merely as a means to attract atheists to spiritual concepts.

"According to the direct understanding, the Absolute Truth is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has all spiritual potencies. No one can be equal to or greater than Him. Everything about the Supreme Personality of Godhead is spiritual, including His body, opulence, and paraphernalia. Mayāvāda philosophy, however, covering His spiritual opulence, advocates the theory of impersonalism." (Cc. *Ādi* 7.111–112)

The Māyāvādīs became interested to hear more about the direct meaning of the *Vedānta-sūtra.*

Lord Caitanya described for them the relationship of the living being with the Supreme Lord in three stages: *sambandha, abhidheya,* and *prayojana. Sambandha-jñāna* means "knowledge of the whole relationship." This is an understanding of four items: one's self, the universe, God, and the relationship between these. Once this is clearly established, the next program is a course of action—to act in that relationship. This is the stage called *abhidheya,* or devotional service to the Lord. After executing the prescribed duties of *abhidheya,* one achieves *prayojana-siddhi,* the fulfillment of the human mission: love of God. This fulfillment can be had by one who sincerely and attentively chants Hare Kṛṣṇa, Hare Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa Kṛṣṇa, Hare Hare/ Hare Rāma, Hare Rāma, Rāma Rāma, Hare Hare.

Lord Caitanya explained many details of this subject, and his fellow *sannyāsīs* became gentle and humble toward Him. After taking lunch with them, the Lord returned to His residence.

Applying Logic

Following this incident, the many Māyāvādī *sannyāsīs* of Benares felt some of the symptoms of love of God. They began to visit Lord Caitanya and relish His association. The entire town began to praise Lord Caitanya and chant the holy names of the Lord.

Hearing of the arguments of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu and seeing His extraordinary victory, Candraśekhara, Tapana Miśra, and Sanātana Gosvāmī were extremely pleased. They were happy that their spiritual master had given a good lesson to the party of offenders they had found impossible to reason with.

In this way the impossible became possible: Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu was able to turn the staunchly critical Māyāvādī philosophers toward the path of love of Kṛṣṇa. This event brings to mind Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja's request to all logicians, impersonalists, and experts in philosophical debate: "If you are indeed interested in logic and argument, kindly apply it to the mercy of Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu. If you do so, you will find it to be strikingly wonderful." (Cc. Ādi 8.15)

Karuṇā Dhārinī Devī Dāsī, a disciple of His Grace Vīrabāhu Dāsa, serves the deities at ISKCON Los Angeles, where she joined ISKCON in 1979. She lives with her husband and daughter.

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Guwahati, Assam — Ulubari Chariali, South Sarania, 781 007/ Tel. (361) 2525963/ iskcon.guwahati@pamho.net
Hanumkonda, AP — Neeladri Rd., Kapuwada, 506 011/ Tel. (8712) 77399
Haridaspur, WB — P.O. Chhaygharia, Bangaon, 24 Parganas 743 704/ Tel. (3215) 57856
Haridwar, Uttaranchal — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, G. House, Nai Basti, Mahadev Nagar, Bhimgoda, 249 401/ Tel. (1334) 260818
Hyderabad, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Nampally Station Rd., 500 001/ Tel. 8106130279 or (40) 24744969/ iskcon.hyderabad@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guesthouse.iskconhyd@pamho.net
Imphal, Manipur — Hare Krishna Land, Airport Rd., 795 001/ Tel. (385) 2455693/ manimandir@sancharnet.in
Indore, MP — ISKCON, Nipania, Indore/ Tel. 9300474043/ mahaman.acbsp@pamho.net
Jaipur, Rajasthan — ISKCON, Giridhari Dauji Temple, ISKCON Rd., Opp. Vijay Path, Mansarovar, Jaipur 302 020 (mail: 84/230, Sant Namdev Marg, Opp. K.V. No. 5, Mansarovar, Jaipur 302 020) Tel. (141) 2782765 or 2781860/ jaipur@pamho.net
Jammu, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, c/o Shankar Charitable Trust, Shakti Nagar, Near AG Office/ Tel. (191) 2582306
Jhansi, UP — Inside Saiyar Gate, Near Kali Badi/ Tel. (510) 2443602
Kanpur, UP — Mainawati Marg, Bithur Rd., Nawabganj, 208 002/ Tel. 9037188117, 9198707801, or 9198707804/ iskcon.kanpur@pamho.net
Katra, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Sri Kalika Mata Mandir, Katra Vaishnodevi, 182 101/ Tel. (1991) 233047
Kolkata, WB — 3C Albert Rd. (behind Minto Park, opp. Birla High School), 700 017/ Tel. (33) 2287-3757 or -6075/ iskcon.calcutta@pamho.net
Kurukshetra, Haryana — ISKCON, Main Bazaar, 136 118/ Tel. (1744) 234806 or 235529
Lucknow, UP — 1 Ashok Nagar, Guru Govind Singh Marg, 226 018/ Tel. (522) 2635000, 2630026; or 9415235050/ iskcon.lucknow@pamho.net
Ludhiana, Punjab — Sterling Tower, Vrindavan Rd., Civil Lines, 141001/ Tel. 9316970600 or (161) 2770600/ iskcon.ludhiana@pamho.net
Madurai, TN — 37 Maninagaram Main Road, 625 001/ Tel. (452) 274-6472
Mangalore, Karnataka — ISKCON Sri Jagannath Mandir, near Hotel Woodlands, Bunts Hostel Rd., 575 003/ Tel. (824) 2423326 or 2442756, or 9844325616
◆ **Mayapur, WB —** ISKCON, Shree Mayapur Chandrodaya Mandir, Mayapur Dham, Dist. Nadia, 741313/ Tel. (3472) 245620, 245240 or 245355/ Fax: (3472) 245238/ mayapur.chandrodaya@pamho.net
Moirang, Manipur — Nongban Enkhol, Tidim Rd./ Tel. (3879) 795133
◆ **Mumbai, Maharashtra —** Hare Krishna Land, Juhu 400 049/ Tel. (22) 26206860/ Fax: (22) 26205214/ info@iskconmumbai.com; guesthouse.mumbai@pamho.net
◆ **Mumbai, Maharashtra —** 7 K. M. Munshi Marg, Chowpatty 400 007/ Tel. (22) 23665500/ Fax: (22) 23665555/ info@radhagopinath.com
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Nagpur, Maharashtra — Bharatwada Road, Near Golmohar Nagar, Ramanuja Nagar, Kalamana Market, Nagpur 440 008/ Tel. 937015638, 9371064102 or 9423635311/ iskcon.nagpur@pamho.net
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◆ **New Delhi —** Hare Krishna Hill, Sant Nagar Main Rd., East of Kailash, 110 065/ Tel. (11) 2623-5133, 4, 5, 6 or 7/ Fax: (11) 2621-5421/ delhi@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guest.house.new.delhi@pamho.net
New Delhi — 41/77, Punjabi Bagh (West), 110 026/ Tel. (11) 25222851 or 25227478/ iskcon.punjabi.bagh@pamho.net
Noida, UP — A-5, Sector-33, 201 301 (Opposite NTPC office)/ Tel. (120) 2506211
Pandharpur, Maharashtra — Hare Krishna Dhama, East Bank of Chandrabhaga River, Pandharpur, Dist. Solapur, 413 304/ Tel. (2186) 267242 or 267266, or 9423335991/ iskcon.pandharpur@pamho.net
Patna, Bihar — Sri Sri Banke Bihariji Mandir, Golok Dham, Budha Marg, Patna-1/ Tel. (612) 2220794, 2687637, or 2685081; or 09431021881/ Fax: (612) 2205929/ krishna.kripa.jps@pamho.net
Pune, Maharashtra — 4 Tarapoor Rd., Camp, 411 001/ Tel. (20) 41033222 or 41033223/ nvcc@iskconpune.in
Puri, Odisha — Bhakti Kuti, Swargadwar, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 231440
Rajahmundry, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Goutami Ghat, 533 101/ Tel. (883) 2442277 or 2442288/ gopinathdasa@yahoo.com
Rajkot, Gujarat — Sri Sri Radha Neelmadhav Dham, Kalawad Rd., opposite Kankot Patiya, Mota Mava, 360 005/ Tel. 9898550185/ vaishnavseva@yahoo.co.in
Raipur, Chhatisgarh — Hare Krishna Land, Alopi Nagar, Opposite Maharshi Vidyalaya, Tatibandh, Raipur 492 001/ Tel. (771) 5037555/ iskconraipur@yahoo.com
Ranaghat, WB — Gourdham, Habibpur, Ranaghat, Dist. Nadia, 741 403/ Tel. (3473) 281150 or 281226/ shyamrup.jps@pamho.net
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Secunderabad, AP — 27 St. John's Rd., 500 026/ Tel. (40) 780-5232/ Fax: (40) 814021
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Srirangam, TN — 103 Amma Mandapam Rd., Srirangam, Trichy 620 006/ Tel. (431) 2433945/ iskcon_srirangam@yahoo.co.in
Surat, Gujarat — Ashram Rd., Jahangirpura, 395 005/ Tel. (261) 276-5891 or 276-5516/ surat@pamho.net
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Tirunelveli, TN — 10B Tiruvananthapuram, Near Vannarapettai Circle, 627 002/ Tel. (462) 2501640
Tirupati, AP — K.T. Rd., Vinayaka Nagar, 517 507/ Tel. (877) 2231760 or 2230009/ revati.raman.jps@pamho.net; Guestouse: guesthouse.tirupati@pamho.net
Udhampur, J&K — Srila Prabhupada Ashram, Srila Prabhupada Marg, Srila Prabhupada Nagar, 182 101/ Tel. (1992) 270298/ info@iskconudhampur.com
Ujjain, MP — 35–37 Hare Krishna Land, Bharatpuri, 456 010/ Tel. (734) 2535000 or 2531000, or 9300969016/ Fax: (734) 2536000/ iskcon.ujjain@pamho.net
Vallabh Vidyanagar, Gujarat — Opp. B&B Polytechnic, Mota Bazaar, Dist. Anand, 388 120/ Tel. (26192) 230796 or 233012/ iskcon.vvnagar@pamho.net
Varanasi, UP — ISKCON, B 27/80 Durgakund Rd., Near Durgakund Police Station, Varanasi 221 010/ Tel. (542) 276422 or 222617
Vellore, TN — Chennai Ext. Centre, 10–12, 10th East Cross Rd., Gandhi Nagar, 632 006
Vijayawada, AP — Venkatapalem Karakatta Rd., Undavalli Village, Tadepalli Mandal, Vijayawada, Guntur Dist. 522 501/ Tel. (8645) 272513/ mmdasiskconvijayawada@gmail.com
Visakhapatnam, AP — Hare Krishna Land, Sagaranagar-45 (City office and mail: Plot No. 52, Pandurangapuram Beach Rd., Visakhapatnam 530 043)/ Tel. (891) 2528376 or 6537625/ samba.jps@pamho.net; Guesthouse: guesthouse.vizag@pamho.net
◆ **Vrindavan, UP —** Krishna-Balaram Mandir, Bhaktivedanta Swami Marg, Raman Reti, Mathura Dist., 281 124/ Tel. & fax: (565) 2540728/ iskcon.vrindavan@pamho.net; (Guesthouse) Tel. (565) 2540022/ ramamani@sancharnet.in
Warangal, AP — Mulugu Rd., Ayappa Pidipally, 506 007/ Tel. (8712) 426182

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Assam — Karnamadhu, Dist. Karimganj
Chamorshi, Maharashtra — 78 Krishnanagar Dham, Dist. Gadhachiroli, 442 603/ Tel. (218) 623473
Hyderabad, AP (New Naimisaranya Farm) — P. O. Dabilpur Village, Medchal Tq., R.R. Dist., 501 401/ Tel. (40) 65520070 or 9440057263/ naimisaranya@pamho.net
Indore, MP (Krishna-Balarama Mandir) — Hare Krishna Vihar, Nipania Village/ Tel. (731) 572794
Mayapur, WB — (contact ISKCON Mayapur)
Puri, Odisha — ISKCON, Bhaktivedanta Ashram, Sipasirubuli, 752 001/ Tel. (6752) 230494
Surat, Gujarat — Bhaktivedanta Rajavidyalaya, Krishnalok, Surat-Bardoli Rd. Gangapur, P. O. Gangadhara, Dist. Surat, 394 310/ Tel. (02622) 63546

Many temples have their own websites, which you can find at our online directory: http://directory.krishna.com. Telephone numbers include country codes, identified by a +. To save space, we've skipped the codes for North America (1) and India (91). For information on international calling, go to www.howtocallabroad.com. ◆ Temples with restaurants or dining

Vrindavan, UP — Vrinda Kund, Nandagaon, Dist. Mathura, U.P.
Yamunanagar, Haryana — ISKCON-Hare Krishna Dham, Hare Krishna Marg, Raghunathpuri, Yamuna Nagar 135001/ Tel. (01732) 321001 or (mobile) 09355330775/ vishu_bakshi05@yahoo.co.in

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

Kolkata, WB — Govinda's, ISKCON House, 22 Gurusaday Rd., 700 019/ Tel. (33) 24866922 or 24866009

MALAYSIA

Bahau — 156 Taman Sornam, Bahau 72100, Negeri Sembilan/ Tel. +60 (6) 481-4350 or 454-8982/ paramanandakp@yahoo.com
Bukit Mertajam — 429 Jalan Sungai Rambai, 14000 Bukit Mertajam/ Tel. +60 (4) 538-1276/ arumugam@notes.asemal.com.my
Ipoh — 15-H Jalan Lang, Jalan Padang, Tembak, 30000 Ipoh Perak, Darul Ridzuan/ Tel. +60 (5) 506-1601
Klang — No. 20, Lorong Besi 4, Off Jl. Teluk Pulai, Selangor D.E., 41100/ Tel. +60 (12) 6342464, (12) 3179206 or (603) 33712060/ ramram991@yahoo.com
Kuala Lumpur — Lot 9901, Jalan Awan Jawa, Taman Yarl, 58200 Kuala Lumpur/ Tel. +60 (3) 7980-7355/ Fax: +60 (3) 7987-9901/ president@iskconkl.com
Kuching — Lot 680, Block 250, Lorong Ketitir 3, Batu Kawa, 93250 Kuching, Sarawak/ Tel. +60 (82) 688-708/ kripa@tm.net.my
Penang — 43A Jalan Kebun Bunga, 11350 Penang/ Tel. +60 (4) 229-5958/ isana_gauranga@hotmail.com
Prai — 3051 Lorong Jelawat 4, Seberang Jaya, 13700 Prai/ Tel. +60 43808897 or 43809989/ Fax: 43808898/ kaleshadas@gmail.com
Seremban — 28/7J Taman Desa, Temiang, 70200 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan (mail: 14 RJ 1/1, Taman Rasah Jaya, 70300 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan)/ Tel. +60 (6) 765-1379/ ppnada@tm.net.my
Sungei Petani — Lot 46, Jalan 1/6, Taman Sri Wang, 08000 Sungei Petani/ abbay_143@hotmail.com
Taiping — 24 Lorong Panglima (Cator Ave.), Assam Kumbang, 34000 Taiping, Perak D.R. (mail: 590 Jalan Wat Siam, Kampung Pinang, 34600 Kamunting, Taiping, Perak)/ Tel. +60 (5) 807-9702 or 808-1475
Teluk Intan — Jalan Sungai Manik, 36000 Teluk Intan, Perak/ Tel. +63 (32) 83254

OTHER COUNTRIES

Alaminos, Philippines — 3rd/4th Floors, Donato's Trading Building, F. Fule Street, Alaminos, Laguna 4001/ Tel. +63 (49) 5672104 or 9106576483/ iskcon.philippines@yahoo.com
Bangkok, Thailand — Soi 3, Tanon Itsarapap, Toonburi/ Tel. +66 29445346, 814455401 or 897810623/ swami.bvv.narasimha@pamho.net
Chittagong, Bangladesh — Caitanya Cultural Society, 23 Nandan Kanan, N. N. Paul Blvd./ Tel. + 880 (31) 610822
Chittagong, Bangladesh — Sri Krishna Mandir, in front of Afmi Plaza, Prabartak Sangha (mail: P. O. Box 440)/ Tel. +880 (31) 2551950, 610822; or 1819395948/ iskconctg@gmail.com
Colombo, Sri Lanka — 188 New Chetty St., Colombo 13/ Tel. +94 (11) 2433325/ Fax: +94 (11) 2471099/ iskcon@slt.lk
Denpasar, Indonesia — Radha-Rasesvara Mandir, Jl. Tanah Putih, Gg. Tanah Ayu, Blumbungan, Sibang Gede, Abiansemal, Badung, Bali, 80352/ Tel. +62 (361) 228391, 462596, or 3145052/ Fax: (361) 467722/ iskcon_id@yahoo.com
Dhaka, Bangladesh — 5 Chandra Mohon Basak St., Banagram, 1203/ Tel. +880 (2) 236249/ Fax: (2) 837287/ iskcon_bangladesh@yahoo.com
Dhaka, Bangladesh — 79 Swamibag, Dhaka-11/ Tel. +880 (2) 7122747 or 7122488/ info@iskconbd.org
Hong Kong — 6/F Oceanview Court, 27 Chatham Rd. South (mail: P.O. Box 98919)/ Tel. +852 2739-6818/ Fax: +852 (2) 724-2186/ iskcon.hong.kong@pamho.net
Jakarta, Indonesia — Yayasan Radha-Govinda, P.O. Box 2694, Jakarta Pusat 10001/ Tel. +62 (21) 489-9646/ matsyads@bogor.wasantara.net.id
Jessore, Bangladesh — Nitai Gaur Mandir, Kathakhali Bazaar P. O., Panjia
Jessore, Bangladesh — Sri Rup-Sanatan Smriti Tirtha Mandir, Ramshara, Magurahat P. O., Abhaynagar
Kathmandu, Nepal — Budhanilkantha (mail: GPO Box 3520)/ Tel. +977 (1) 4373790 or 4373786/ Fax: (1) 414409 (Attn: ISKCON)/ iskconkathmandu@gmail.com
Mandalay, Myanmar — ISKCON Sri Krishna Temple, Corner of 19th Thukha St., Nanshe, Mandalay/ sdas108@hotmail.com
Manila, Philippines — #9105 Banuyo St., San Antonio Village, Makati City/ Tel. & fax: +63 (2) 8901947; Tel. +63 (2) 8963357/ iskconmanila@yahoo.com
Myitkyina, Myanmar — ISKCON Sri Jagannath Temple, Bogyoke St., Shansu Taung, Myitkyina, Kachin State/ mahanadi@mptmail.net.mm
Osafia, Israel — P. O. Box 2232, Osafia Village 30090/ Tel. +972 (4) 839-2876
Osaka, Japan — 1-1-17 Katamachi, Miyakojima-ku, Osaka 534-0025/ Tel. +81 (6) 6352-0729
Sylhet, Bangladesh — Yugal Tila, Kajalshah, Opp. Osmani Medical College, Gate No. 1, Sylhet 03100/ Tel. +880 821721358, 1711478190, or 1718781144/ info@iskconsylhet.com
Tai Pei City, Taiwan — Zhong Xiao East Rd., Sec 2, Lane 39, Alley 2, No 3, 2F/ Tel. +886 (2) 2395-6010 or 2395-6715/ bhavna@ms22.hinet.net
Tokyo, Japan — 2-23-4 Funabori, Edogawa-ku, Tokyo 134-0091/ Tel. +81 (3) 3877-3000/ iskcon.new.gaya.japan@gmail.com
Yogyakarta, Indonesia — P. O. Box 25, Babarsari YK, DIY

RURAL COMMUNITIES

Bangladesh (Kulaura) — Rangirkul Bidyashram, Kulaura, Dist. Moulvibazar/ Fax: +880 (8624) 88035
Bangladesh (Sri Pundarika Dhama) — Mekhla, Hathazari, Dist. Chittagong/ Tel. +880 (31) 610822
Bangladesh (Comilla) — Jagannathpur, Comilla
Indonesia (Govinda Kunja) — (contact ISKCON Jakarta)

RESTAURANTS

Tokyo — Vegetable-Kitchen Govinda's, 5-17-10 Nakano, Nakano-ku, Tokyo 164-0001/Tel. +81 (3) 3387-8998; govindas_murata@yahoo.co.jp
Tokyo — Devadeva Cafe, 2-14-7 Kichijoji-Honcho, Musashino-City, Tokyo/ Tel. +81 (422) 21-6220; info@devadevacafe.com

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Edmonton, Alberta — 9353 35th Ave. NW, T6E 5R5/ Tel. (780) 439-9999/ harekrishna.edmonton@gmail.com
Montreal, Quebec — 1626 Pie IX Blvd., H1V 2C5/ Tel. & fax: (514) 521-1301/ iskconmontreal@gmail.com
◆ **Ottawa, Ontario —** 212 Somerset St. E., K1N 6V4/ Tel. (613) 565-6544/ Fax: (613) 565-2575/ iskconottawa@sympatico.ca
Regina, Saskatchewan — 1279 Retallack St., S4T 2H8/ Tel. (306) 525-0002 or -6461/ jagadishadas@yahoo.com
Toronto, Ontario — 243 Avenue Rd., M5R 2J6/ Tel. (416) 922-5415/ Fax: (416) 922-1021/ toronto@iskcon.net
Vancouver, B.C. — 5462 S.E. Marine Dr., Burnaby V5J 3G8/ Tel. (604) 433-9728/ Fax: (604) 648-8715/ akrura@krishna.com; Govinda's Bookstore & Cafe/ Tel. (604) 433-7100 or 1-888-433-8722

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Boise, Idaho — 1615 Martha St., 83706/ Tel. (208) 344-4274/ boise_temple@yahoo.com
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Columbus, Ohio — 379 W. Eighth Ave., 43201/ Tel. (614) 421-1661/ premvilasdas.rns@gmail.com
◆ **Dallas, Texas —** 5430 Gurley Ave., 75223/ Tel. (214) 827-6330/ Fax: (214) 823-7264/ info@radhakalachandji.com
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Gainesville, Florida — 214 N.W. 14th St., 32603/ Tel. (352) 336-4183/ Fax: (352) 379-2927/ kalakantha.acbsp@pamho.net
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Las Vegas, Nevada — 7181 Dean Martin Dr., 89118/ Tel. (702) 434-8332/ info@govindascenter.com
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◆ **Miami, Florida —** 3220 Virginia St., 33133 (mail: 3109 Grand Ave. #491, Coconut Grove, FL 33133)/ Tel. (305) 442-7218/ devotionalservice@iskcon-miami.org
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◆ **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania —** 1408 South St., 19146/ Tel. (215) 985-9303/ govindasvegetarian@gmail.com
Phoenix, Arizona — 100 S. Weber Dr., Chandler, 85226/ Tel. (480) 705-4900/ Fax: (480) 705-4901/ premadhatridd@gmail.com
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Salt Lake City, Utah — 965 E. 3370 South, 84106/ Tel. (801) 487-4005/ utahkrishnas@gmail.com
San Antonio, Texas — 6772 Oxford Trace, 78240/ Tel. (210) 420-1182/ aadasa@gmail.com
◆ **San Diego, California —** 1030 Grand Ave., Pacific Beach 92109/ Tel. (858) 483-2500/ Fax: (858) 483-0941/ krishna.sandiego@gmail.com
San Jose, California — 951 S. Bascom Ave., 95128/ Tel. (408) 293-4959/ iskconsanjose@yahoo.com
Seattle, Washington — 1420 228th Ave. S.E., Sammamish 98075/ Tel. (425) 246-8436/ Fax: (425) 868-8928/ info@vedicculturalcenter.org
◆ **Spanish Fork, Utah —** Krishna Temple Project & KHQN Radio, 8628 S. State Rd., 84660/ Tel. (801) 798-3559/ Fax: (810) 798-9121/ carudas@earthlink.net
Tallahassee, Florida — 1323 Nylic St., 32304/ Tel. & fax: (850) 224-3803/ tallahassee.iskcon@gmail.com
Towaco, New Jersey — 100 Jacksonville Rd. (mail: P.O. Box 109), 07082/ Tel. & fax: (973) 299-0970/ madhupati.jas@pamho.net
◆ **Tucson, Arizona —** 711 E. Blacklidge Dr., 85719/ Tel. (520) 792-0630/ Fax: (520) 791-0906/ sandaminidd@cs.com
Washington, D.C. — 10310 Oaklyn Dr., Potomac, Maryland 20854/ Tel. (301) 299-2100/ Fax: (301) 299-5025/ info@iskconofdc.org

RURAL COMMUNITIES

◆ **Alachua, Florida (New Raman Reti) —** 17306 N.W. 112th Blvd., 32615 (mail: P.O. Box 819, 32616)/ Tel. (386) 462-2017/ Fax: (386) 462-2641/ alachuatemple@gmail.com
Carriere, Mississippi (New Talavan) — 31492 Anner Road, 39426/ Tel. (601) 749-9460 or 799-1354/ Fax: (601) 799-2924/ talavan@hughes.net
Gurabo, Puerto Rico (New Govardhana Hill) — Carr. 181, Km. 16.3, Bo. Santa Rita, Gurabo (mail: HC-01, Box 8440, Gurabo, PR 00778)/ Tel. (787) 367-3530 or (787) 737-1722/ manonatha@gmail.com
Hillsborough, North Carolina (New Goloka) — 1032 Dimmocks Mill Rd., 27278/ Tel. (919) 732-6492/ bkgoswami@earthlink.net

Centers Around the World

◆ **Moundsville, West Virginia (New Vrindaban) —** 3759 McCrearys Ridge Rd., 26041/ Tel. (304) 843-1600 (Guesthouse extension: 111)/ mail@newvrindaban.com
Mulberry, Tennessee (Murari-sevaka) — 532 Murari Lane, 37359/ Tel. (931) 759-6888/ murari_sevaka@yahoo.com
Port Royal, Pennsylvania (Gita Nagari) — 534 Gita Nagari Rd./ Tel. (717) 527-4101/ dhruva.bts@pamho.net
Sandy Ridge, North Carolina — Prabhupada Village, 1283 Prabhupada Rd., 27046/ Tel. (336) 593-9888/ madanmohanmohini@yahoo.com

ADDITIONAL RESTAURANT

Hato Rey, Puerto Rico — Tamal Krishna's Veggie Garden, 131 Eleanor Roosevelt, 00918/ Tel. (787) 754-6959/ Fax: (787) 756-7769/ tkveggiegarden@aol.com

EUROPE

UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND

Belfast, Northern Ireland — Sri Sri Radha-Madhava Mandir, Brooklands, 140 Upper Dunmurray Lane, BT17 OHE/ Tel. +44 (28) 9062 0530/ hk.temple108@gmail.com
Birmingham, England — 84 Stanmore Rd., Edgbaston B16 9TB/ Tel. +44 (121) 420 4999/ birmingham@iskcon.org.uk
Cardiff, Wales — The Soul Centre, 116 Cowbridge Rd., East Canton CF11 9DX/ Tel. +44 (29) 2039 0391/ the.soul.centre@pamho.net
Coventry, England — Kingfield Rd., Coventry (mail: 19 Gloucester St., Coventry CV1 3BZ)/ Tel. +44 (24) 7655 2822 or 5420/ haridas.kds@pamho.net
◆ **Dublin, Ireland —** 83 Middle Abbey St., Dublin 1/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ dublin@krishna.ie; Govinda's: info@govindas.ie
Lesmahagow, Scotland — Karuna Bhavan, Bankhouse Rd., Lesmahagow, Lanarkshire, ML11 0ES/ Tel. +44 (1555) 894790/ Fax: +44 (1555) 894526/ karunabhavan@aol.com
Leicester, England — 21 Thoresby St., North Evington, LE5 4GU/ Tel. +44 (116) 276 2587/ pradyumna.jas@pamho.net
◆ **London, England (city) —** 10 Soho St., W1D 3DL/ Tel. +44 (20) 7437-3662; residential /pujaris, 7439-3606; shop, 7287-0269; Govinda's Restaurant, 7437-4928/ Fax: +44 (20) 7439-1127/ london@pamho.net
◆ **London, England (country) —** Bhaktivedanta Manor, Dharam Marg, Hilfield Lane, Watford, Herts, WD25 8EZ/ Tel. +44 (1923) 851000/ Fax: +44 (1923) 851006/ info@krishnatemple.com; Guesthouse: bmguesthouse@krishna.com
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Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England — 304 Westgate Rd., NE4 6AR/ Tel. +44 (191) 272 1911
◆ **Swansea, Wales —** 8 Craddock St., SA1 3EN/ Tel. +44 (1792) 468469/ iskcon.swansea@pamho.net (restaurant: govin–das@hotmail.com)

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Upper Lough Erne, Northern Ireland — Govindadwipa Dhama, Inisrath Island, Derrylin, Co. Fermanagh, BT92 9GN/ Tel. +44 (28) 6772 3878/ govindadwipa@pamho.net
London, England — (contact Bhaktivedanta Manor) Programs are held regularly in more than forty other cities in the UK. For information, contact ISKCON Reader Services, P.O. Box 730, Watford WD25 8EZ, UK; www.iskcon.org.uk

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Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 4 Aungier St., Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 475 0309/ Fax: +353 (1) 478 6204/ info@govindas.ie
Dublin, Ireland — Govinda's, 18 Merrion Row, Dublin 2/ Tel. +353 (1) 661 5095/ praghosa.sdg@pamho.net

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Somogyvamos — Krsna-völgy, Fö u. 38, 8699 Somogyvamos/ Tel. & fax: +36 (85) 540-002 or 340-185/ info@krisnavolgy.hu

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Budapest — Govinda Restaurant, Vigyazo Ferenc St. 4, 1051 Budapest/ Tel. +36 (1) 269-1625 or 302-2284/ Fax: (01) 473-1310

ITALY

Bergamo — Villaggio Hare Krishna (da Medolago strada per Terno d'Isola), 24040 Chignolo d'Isola (BG)/ Tel. +39 (035) 4940705/ Fax: +39 (035) 199622233/ villagio.hare.krsna@hare.krsna.it
◆ **Rome —** Govinda Centro Hare Krsna, via Santa Maria del Pianto, 16, 00186/ Tel. +39 (06) 68891540/ govinda.roma@harekrsna.it
Vicenza — via Roma 9, 36020 Albettone (VI)/ Tel. +39 (0444) 790573/ Fax: +39 (0444) 790581/ prabhupadadesh@pamho.net

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◆ **Florence (Villa Vrindavan) —** via Scopeti 108, 50026 San Casciano in Val di Pesa (FI)/ Tel. +39 (055) 820054/ Fax: +39 (055) 828470/ isvaripriya@libero.it

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Milan — Govinda's, via Valpetrosa 5, 20123/ Tel. +39 (02) 862417

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Brihuega (New Vraja Mandala) — (Santa Clara) 19411 Brihuega / Tel. +34 949 280436

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◆ **Gothenburg —** Karl Johansgatan 57, SE-414 55, Göteborg/ Tel. +46 (31) 421642/ info@harekrishnagoteborg.com
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◆ **Lund —** Bredgatan 28, 222 21/ Tel. +46 (46) 399500; Restaurant: +46 (46) 120413/ Fax: +46 (46) 188804/ locan@bbt.se
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Järna — Almviks Gård, 153 95/ Tel. +46 (8551) 52050/ Fax: +46 (8551) 52060/ info@almviksgard.se

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Malmo — Govinda's, Brogatan 11, 211 44 Malmo/ Tel. +46 (732) 306663

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Langenthal, Switzerland — Gaura Bhaktiyoga Center, Dorfgasse 43, 4900 Langenthal/ Tel. +41 62 922 05 48/ gaura.bhaktiyoga.center@gmx.ch
◆ **Lisbon, Portugal —** Rua Dona Estefania, 91 R/C 1000 Lisboa/ Tel. & fax: +351 (1) 314-0314 or 352-0038
◆ **Ljubljana, Slovenia —** Zibertova 27, 1000/ Tel. +386 (1) 4312319 or 4312124/ Fax: +386 (61) 310815/ ananta.rns@pamho.net
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Prague, Czech Republic — Postal address: Hare Krishna Temple, Luzce 48, 267 18, post office Karlstejn, Czech Republic (for directions: http://harekrsna.cz/cvs/how_get_there)/ Tel. +420 311 516 558 or +420 603 205 991/ info@harekrsna.cz
Pula, Croatia — Vinkuran centar 58, 52000 (mail: P.O. Box 16)/ Tel. & fax: +385 (52) 573581
◆ **Radhadesh, Belgium —** Chateau de Petite Somme, 6940 Septon-Durbuy/ Tel. +32 (086) 322926 (restaurant: 321421)/ Fax: +32 (086) 322929/ radhadesh@pamho.net
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RURAL COMMUNITIES

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France (La Nouvelle Mayapura) — Domaine d'Oublaisse, 36360, Lucay le Mâle/ Tel. +33 (2) 5440-2395/ Fax: +33 (2) 5440-2893/ oublaise@free.fr

Poland (New Santipur) — Czarnow 21, 58-424 Pisarzowice, woj. dolnoslaskie/ Tel. +48 (75) 744-8892/ radhu@wp.pl

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Bratislava, Slovakia — Govinda, Obchodna 30, 811 06 Bratislava/ Tel. +421 (2) 5926 2366
Kosice, Slovakia — Govinda, Puskinova 8, 040 01 Kosice/ Tel. +421 (910) 947112
Locarno, Switzerland — Govinda Restaurant, Via Della Motta 10, Locarno 6600/ Tel. +41 (091) 7523852 or 796260804/ radhakanta@pamho.net
Ljubljana, Slovenia — Holyfood (snackbar), Igriska 5, 1000 Ljubljana/ Tel. +386 (1) 251 13 84 or (41) 32 37 19
Oslo, Norway — Krishna's Cuisine, Sørkedalsveien 10, 0369 Oslo/ Tel. +47 (2) 269-2269
Prague, Czech Republic — Govinda's, Soukenicka 27, 110 00 Prague 1/ Tel. +420 605 700 871 or 605 700 874/ info@govindarestaurace.cz
Prague, Czech Republic — Govinda's, Na hrazi 5, 180 00 Prague 8–Liben/ Tel. +420 (2) 8482-3805/ restaurace@govinda.cz
Prague, Czech Republic — Balarama, Orlicka 9, 130 00 Praha 3–Vinohrady/ Tel. +420 (2) 2272 8885/ info@balarama.cz
Presov, Slovakia — Govinda, Hlavna 70, 08001/ Tel. +421 (910) 947108
Tallinn, Estonia — Damodara, Lauteri St. 1, 10114/ Tel. +372 6442650
Zurich, Switzerland — Mohini, Weinbergstr. 15, 8001 Zurich/ Tel. +41 44 252 52 11/ info@mohini.ch

COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES

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Krasnodar — 418, Stepnaya St., selo Elizavetinskoye, Krsnodarski krai/ Tel. +7 (861) 2501694
Kurjinovo — 8, Shosseinaya St., pos. Ershovo, Urupski region, Karachayevo-Cherkessia
Moscow — Leningradsky Prospect, Vladenie 39 (mail: Begovaya str., 13, OPS 284, a/ya 17, 125284 Moscow)/ Tel. +7 (495) 7394377/ temple@veda.ru
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St. Petersburg — Govinda's, 58, Angliysky pr., 190008/ Tel. +7 (812) 1137896
Vladivostok — Vedic Cuisine, 12, Oleansky pr./ Tel. +7 (4232) 26-89-43/ nram@list.ru

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Tashkent, Uzbekistan — 54, A. Kodirov St., Mirabad Tumani, 700005/ Tel. & fax: +998 (371) 2918501/ tashkentmandir@mail.ru
Tbilisi, Georgia — 16, Kacharava St., Avchalskoye sh., 380053/ Tel. +995 (32) 623326 or 985812

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AUSTRALIA

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Sydney — Govinda's Yoga & Meditation Centre, 112 Darlinghurst Rd., Darlinghurst NSW 2010 (mail: P.O. Box 174, Kings Cross 1340)/ Tel. +61 (2) 9380-5162/ Fax: +61 (2) 9360-1736/ sita@govindas.com.au

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Cessnock, NSW (New Gokula) — Lewis Lane (Off Mount View Road, Millfield, near Cessnock [mail: P.O. Box 399, Cessnock, NSW 2325])/ Tel. +61 (2) 4998-1800/ Fax: (Sydney temple)/ iskconfarm@mac.com
Murwillumbah, NSW (New Govardhana) — Tyalgum Rd., Eungella (mail: P.O. Box 687), NSW 2484/ Tel. +61 (2) 6672-6579/ Fax: +61 (2) 6672-5498/ ajita@in.com.au

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Brisbane — Krishna's Cafe, 1st Floor, 82 Vulture St., W. End, QLD 4000/ brisbane@pamho.net
Burleigh Heads — Govindas, 20 James St., Burleigh Heads, QLD 4220/ Tel. +61 (7) 5607-0782/ ajita@in.com.au
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Melbourne — Crossways, 1st Floor, 123 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-2939
Melbourne — Gopal's, 139 Swanston St., VIC 3000/ Tel. +61 (3) 9650-1578
Newcastle — Govinda's Vegetarian Cafe, 110 King St., corner of King & Wolf Streets, NSW 2300/ Tel. +61 (2) 4929-6900 / info@govindascafe.com.au
Perth — Govinda's Restaurant, 194 William St., Northbridge, W.A. 6003/ Tel. +61 (8) 9227-1648/ perth@pamho.net
Perth — Hare Krishna Food for Life, 200 William St., Northbridge, WA 6003/ Tel. +61 (8) 9227-1684/ iskconperth@optusnet.com.au

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We're All in Māyā

IN THE *Bhagavad-gītā* (7.14) Lord Kṛṣṇa refers to *māyā,* the deluding material energy, as *mama māyā:* "My *māyā*." We Vaiṣṇavas accept His word on this, with profound philosophical implications.

The chief philosophical opponents of Vaiṣṇavas are the Māyāvādīs, or impersonalists, who posit ultimate reality as one homogeneous impersonal energy, with no second thing: All the unique entities we perceive, whether things or living beings, are merely mirages. Variety and individual identity are illusions. According to Māyāvāda philosophy, therefore, even Kṛṣṇa is a mirage.

But Kṛṣṇa tells us that the energy pervading everything comes from Him, so reality must comprise at least two elements: God and His energies. *Śvetāsvatara Upaniṣad* states, *parāsya śaktiḥ:* "[The Absolute Truth has] varieties of energy." Two primary categories of energy are the individual souls (*jīvas*) and the material energy (*māyā*). Like Kṛṣṇa, His energies exist eternally, but they are subordinate to Him. The energies never become one with their energetic source. Kṛṣṇa's uniqueness with respect to the *jīvas* and *māyā* is established in *Bhagavad-gītā* 2.12 and 9.4, respectively. Furthermore, Brahmā, the original Vedic authority, says that Kṛṣṇa possesses "unique loveliness" (*viśeṣa śobham*), His beauty and other qualities attracting countless souls to love and serve Him. Can any of us claim that status?

Serving Kṛṣṇa is the eternal position of each individual soul. We cannot escape service, because we are subordinate by nature—and subordinate to nature, or Kṛṣṇa's material energy. So when, for example, we serve nature by being forced to grow old, we serve Kṛṣṇa indirectly.

The subject of Kṛṣṇa's energy is an important one in the age-old debate between Māyāvādīs and Vaiṣṇavas. While both agree that the Absolute Truth (Brahman) is one, or nondual, Vaiṣṇavas argue for variety in oneness. We Gauḍīyā Vaiṣṇavas, followers of Lord Caitanya Mahāprabhu, refer to this concept as *acintya-bhedābheda-tattva:* the doctrine of simultaneous oneness and difference. Like the sun and sunshine, the energies of the one Absolute Truth are identical to their source yet different from Him at the same time.

The Māyāvāda position that the world of our perception doesn't exist stems from their conviction that the Absolute Truth, which is pure spirit, could not transform in any way and still remain one. We Vaiṣṇavas counter that this world is a transformation not of Kṛṣṇa Himself, but of His energy.

One of the implications of the Vaiṣṇava view of God and His energies is that the devotee sees Kṛṣṇa in everything. When Kṛṣṇa says that the energy controlling this world is His, He says that it is very difficult to overcome. The material energy may be unconscious, and thus in that sense inferior to us conscious living beings, but the controller of that energy is the unlimitedly powerful Supreme Lord. Only with His help can we escape its influence.

The *māyā* of the material world has two main functions: It lures us away from our natural position of service to Kṛṣṇa, and it deludes us into full forgetfulness of that position. But that *māyā,* often referred to as *mahā-māyā,* has a spiritual counterpart—its source, *yoga-māyā.* Because *yoga-māyā* is also an energy of Kṛṣṇa's, it too can overpower us. But *yoga-māyā* connects us with Kṛṣṇa. Another meaning of *māyā* is "mercy." By devotional service to Kṛṣṇa we place ourselves under the influence of *yoga-māyā* and in time awaken to our eternal loving relationship with Him. —*Nāgarāja Dāsa*

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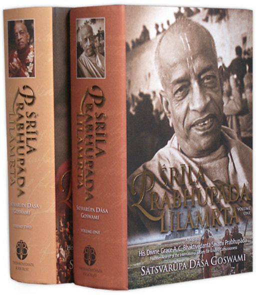

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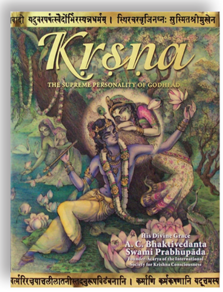

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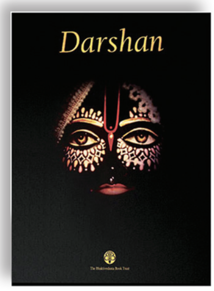

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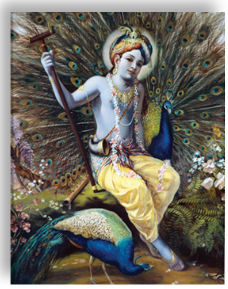

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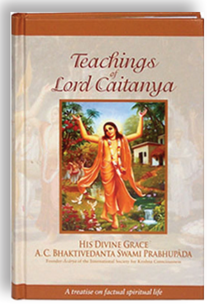

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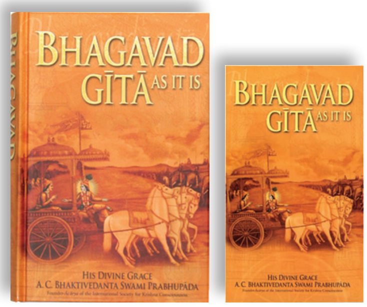

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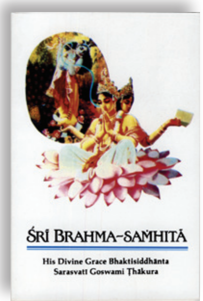

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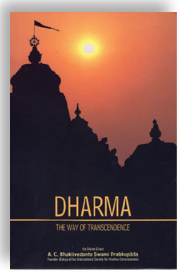

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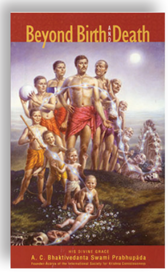

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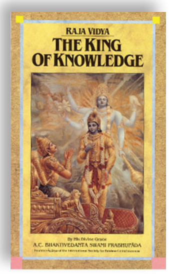

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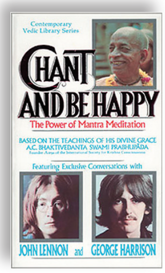

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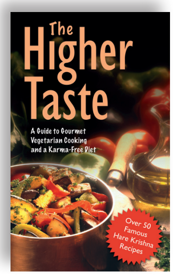

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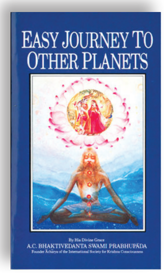

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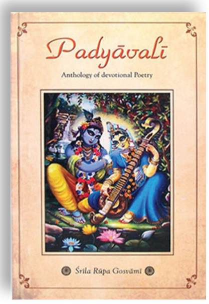
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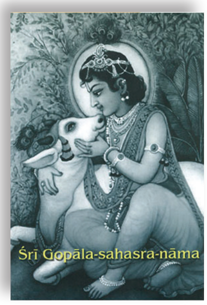
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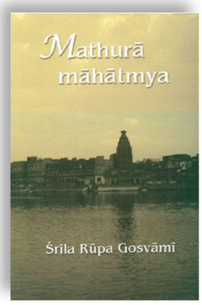
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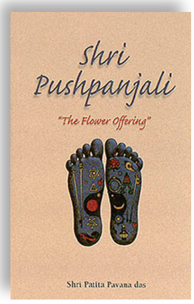
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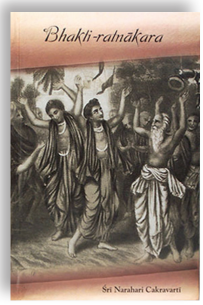
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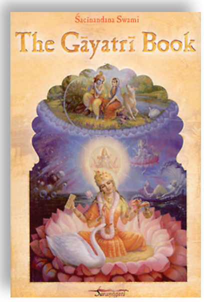
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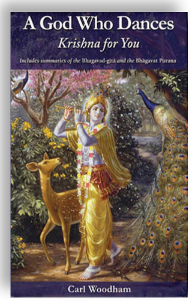
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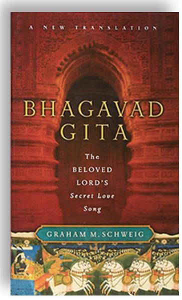
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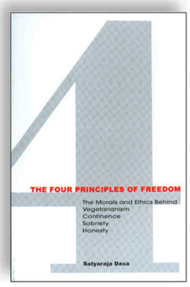
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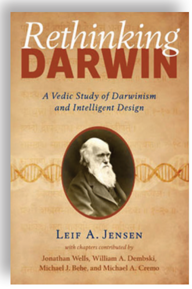
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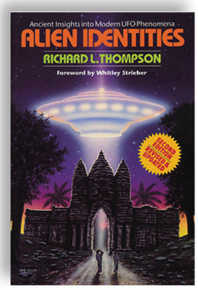
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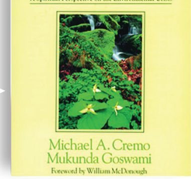
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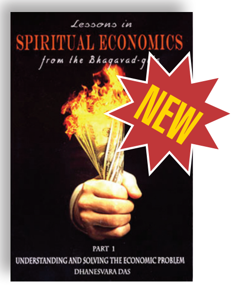
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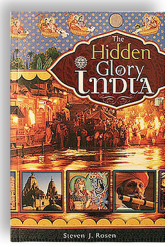
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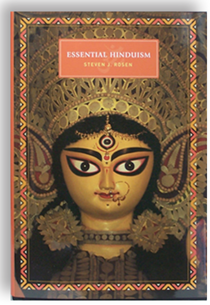
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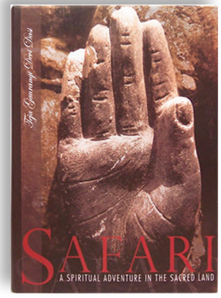
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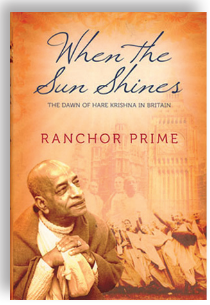
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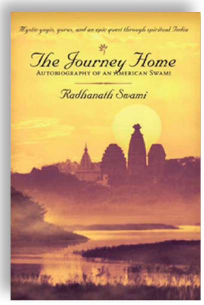
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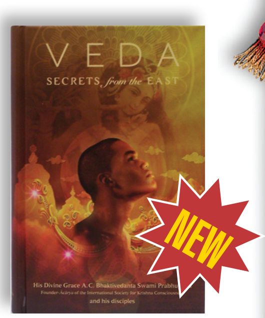
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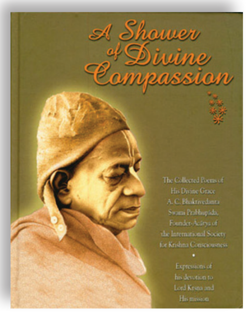
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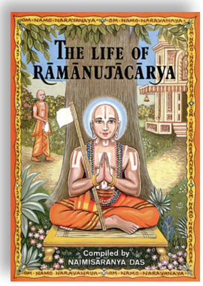
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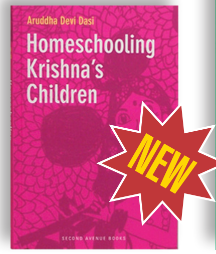
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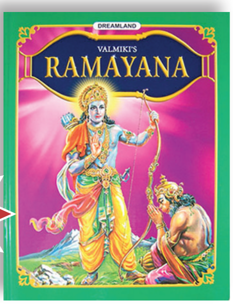
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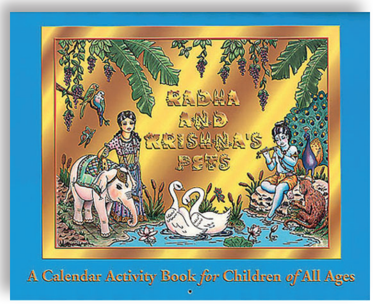
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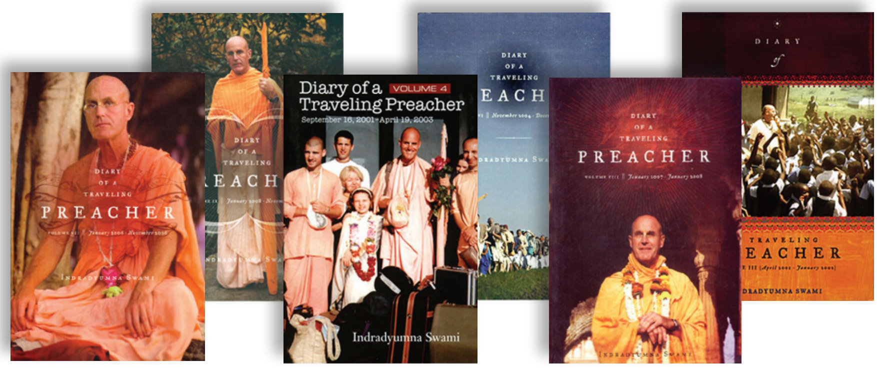
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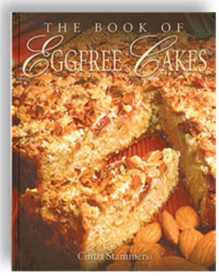

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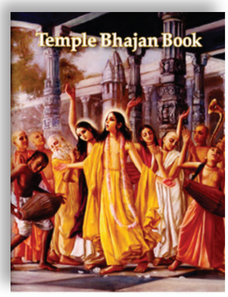

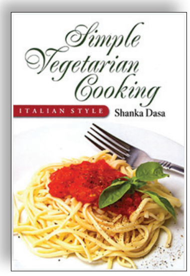

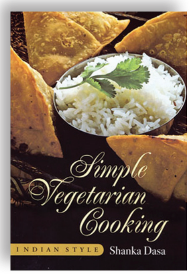

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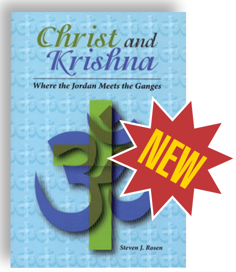

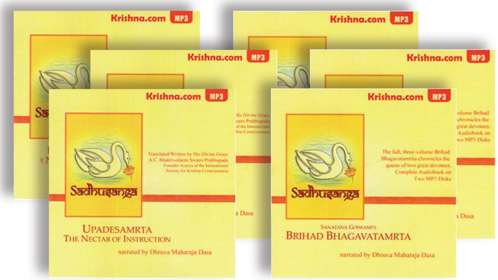

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VEDIC THOUGHTS

The more one advances in spiritual consciousness, the more he can understand the elements of devotional service. Nothing in devotional service is material; everything is spiritual. Consequently a devotee is awarded so-called material opulence for spiritual advancement. This opulence is an aid to help the devotee advance toward the spiritual kingdom.

His Divine Grace A. C.
Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupāda
Śrīmad-Bhāgavatam 6.16.29, Purport

The *ātmā* [individual soul] is called all-pervading (*sarva-gataḥ*) because it accepts all types of bodies, such as that of man, *devatā,* bird, and beast, one after another, according to karma. The *ātmā* also possesses a fixed form (*sthāṇuḥ*) and fixed qualities (*acalaḥ*).

Śrīla Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa
Bhagavad-gītā 2.24, Commentary

Among the followers of Vedic knowledge, most are following the process of fruitive activity and distinguishing between good and bad work. Out of many such sincere fruitive actors, there may be one who is actually wise. Out of many millions of such wise men, one may actually become liberated [*mukta*], and out of many millions of such liberated persons, a pure devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa is very difficult to find.

Śrī Caitanya Mahāprabhu
Śrī Caitanya-caritāmṛta, Madhya-līlā 19.147–148

As long as we hanker after our own pleasures, we try to enjoy the world through the senses and are given to hollow argumentation. But this world is not made for our enjoyment. When spiritual bliss will appear in us like the incessant flow of oil, then shall we be truly tied to the feet of Kṛṣṇa.

Śrīla Bhaktisiddhānta Sarasvatī Ṭhākura
Lecture, Vrindavan, 1928

Since maintaining one's life is not possible without action, one must work to maintain his life. If such activities are done in the mood of enjoyment, then one's qualification as a human is lost and he becomes like an animal. Therefore if one can transform all his bodily activities into activities favorable to the devotional service of the Lord, then that is *bhakti-yoga.*

Śrīla Bhaktivinoda Ṭhākura
Śrī Bhaktyāloka, Part 1 (*Atyāhāra*)

Scriptural evidences clearly indicate that for the yogis, *jñānīs,* and *karmis* to become successful in their individual paths, their engagement in devotional service is imperative, whereas to attain perfection on the path of *bhakti,* which results in spontaneous love of Godhead (*prema*), there is no need of yoga, *jñāna,* karma, or any other process.

Śrīla Viśvanātha Cakravartī Ṭhākura
Madhurya-kadambini, First Shower of Nectar

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